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Activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Strategic communications services, one of the three subprogrammes of the Department of Public Information, is responsible for supporting the substantive goals of the United Nations by devising effective communications strategies on priority issues and carrying out communications campaigns with the objective of broadening an understanding of the Organization's work. This involves publicizing key messages of the Organization through coordinated communications campaigns, reaching out to target audiences and strengthening its outreach to the public in both developed and developing countries through the network of United Nations information centres.

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 63/100 B, summarizes the key advances made by the Department from July 2008 to February 2009 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its strategic communications services.

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Introduction

In its resolution 63/100 B, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session and requested the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

In the same resolution, the General Assembly called on the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information, which met in November 2008, advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services. The present report, submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its thirty-first session, is divided in two parts. Part one addresses thematic communications campaigns in such areas as the Millennium Development Goals, climate change, human rights, the question of Palestine, and Africa, with a focus on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Part two examines the role of the network of United Nations information centres, including the promotion of multilingualism in countries where they serve. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department for the period July 2008 to February 2009.

Part one: Communications campaigns

I. Adopting a strategic approach

1. The Department of Public Information is tasked with promoting the work of the United Nations by providing timely, accurate, impartial, comprehensive and coherent information to the widest possible global audience. The Strategic Communications Division, which is responsible for implementing the subprogramme relating to strategic communications services, devises effective communications strategies on priority issues and carries out communications campaigns to support the substantive goals of the Organization, with the objective of broadening an understanding of its work. The Division also manages the network of United Nations information centres.

2. In order to achieve the greatest public impact, strategic communications services rely on a strategic approach, which requires setting priorities in a manner that enables the Department to do not only what is most pressing, but also where it can have the greatest impact. This involves publicizing key messages of the Organization through coordinated communications campaigns, reaching out to target audiences and strengthening its outreach to the public in both developed and developing countries through the network of United Nations information centres. In order to enhance the coordination of communications activities, the Department continues to utilize the United Nations Communications Group as a coordinating tool.

3. **United Nations Communications Group:** Established in 2002 by the Department, the United Nations Communications Group has emerged as a strong unifying platform for United Nations communicators throughout the United Nations system. Through weekly meetings at Headquarters, issue-specific task forces and meetings at the principals' level, it continues to provide an effective mechanism to develop and implement common communications strategies. The Group's membership has steadily grown and now includes the entire United Nations system. United Nations communications groups are also active in over 80 countries.

4. To standardize United Nations communications guidelines and to provide an organizational structure for operating in times of crisis, the Group at the principals' level has devised a standard operating procedure. This standard operating procedure, adopted at a meeting of the Group in January 2009, brings together communications focal points of the United Nations system relevant to a particular crisis to act under a common communications structure during the crisis. With the overall goal of coordination, unity and effectiveness of United Nations actors, rather than unifying or restricting the messages, key elements of the standard operating procedure were put in place in early January 2009 during the crisis in Gaza.

II. Thematic campaigns

5. The purpose of the Department's communications activities is to help achieve the Organization's substantive goals. The three basic pillars of the work of the United Nations are development, human rights and peace and security. Accordingly, the Department's communications strategies and activities aim to support and advance the Organization's work in these areas. The Department identified Africa as

a regional focus; and youth as a strategic audience for its work. It was guided by the following approaches: improved coordination; new and expanded partnerships; multilingualism; and evaluation.

A. The Department of Public Information and United Nations peacekeeping operations

6. During the reporting period, the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs further coordinated their respective work and roles in supporting communications for and about peace and security issues.

7. The Department of Public Information, working in cooperation with peacekeeping missions, disseminated more than 100 press releases targeting more than 30 troop- and police-contributing countries, focusing on the contributions by individual Member States to United Nations peacekeeping efforts. They received prominent attention in national newspapers and wire services, as well as electronic media. Some 230 television stories related to peacekeeping were produced and distributed to broadcasters globally via UNifeed, generating an estimated 5,000 hits on the Teletrax software the Department uses to monitor pick-up by broadcasters.

8. In collaboration with the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste and the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste, the Department mounted a photo exhibit on the people of Timor and on the United Nations contribution to peace in that country, at United Nations Headquarters in September. United Nations information centres, including in Bogota, Mexico City and Washington, D.C., displayed the sixtieth anniversary of peacekeeping photo exhibit, which had previously been on display at the United Nations Headquarters Visitors' Lobby from 29 May 2008 in observance of the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers and the sixtieth anniversary of peacekeeping. The exhibit was tailored to illustrate the contributions of major troop-contributors and has been shown in more than 10 locations around the world.

9. The United Nations News Centre web portal (www.un.org/news) — one of the most heavily visited segments of the United Nations website — gave issues and developments related to peace and security prominent coverage in all six official languages, carrying nearly 2,000 news articles on peacekeeping matters over the reporting period. News articles in English and French were distributed via the associated e-mail news service to more than 50,000 subscribers worldwide.

10. **Cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support:** the Department of Public Information and the Department of Field Support helped peace operations convert to a Content Management System website, which unifies branding of the missions, while also reducing the requirement for mission-based webmasters, as maintaining the sites no longer requires technical expertise. Fourteen peacekeeping and political missions have adopted the new template, with some missions using Arabic, French and Portuguese, in addition to English. One of the new sites — for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) at unamid.unmissions.org — has been viewed more than 226,000 times in 2008. The Department of Public Information is also working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on

improving its website and on developing a community of practice network among peace operation public information personnel, to be launched in early 2009.

11. The Department, in collaboration with the Peacebuilding Support Office, held a conference on 12 December at United Nations Headquarters on the topic "Media, communications and peacebuilding", to underscore and coordinate efforts to support media and communications as a key pillar of governance in post-conflict countries. The ministers of information from Burundi and Sierra Leone, as well as leading journalists from El Salvador, Kosovo, Liberia and Nepal participated, along with United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the field of media, communications and peacebuilding.

12. **Working with United Nations information centres:** Throughout the year, many of the activities carried out by United Nations information centres focused on peacekeeping operations. These include:

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Bogota** organized a three-week programme entitled "Helmets for Peace" at 10 universities in Bogota as well as the Diplomatic Academy.
- **The United Nations Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro**, in association with the Training Centre for Peacekeeping Operations of the Brazilian Army, developed a number of joint activities aimed at training Brazilian military personnel to be deployed in peacekeeping missions. In 2008, the Centre was named after Sergio Vieira de Mello, who was among those killed in a terror attack on the United Nations office in Baghdad in 2003.

13. **Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse:** The Department of Public Information worked closely with the Conduct and Discipline Unit of the Department of Field Support and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Public Affairs Section to devise a procedure for reporting publicly on the allegations and cases being handled by that office. The Unit, with support from the Department of Public Information, is working on a web-based database to allow for more transparent tracking of the process of all cases, while respecting the privacy of United Nations personnel as well as victims.

14. All of the Department's news and media products were utilized to raise awareness about sexual exploitation and abuse and to increase understanding of United Nations efforts to combat such abuse. The Department produced specific stories related to the allegations against peacekeepers serving in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as actions taken by United Nations peacekeeping operations to implement a zero-tolerance policy on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse. The Department also provided coverage of meetings where the subject was considered in the context of the deliberations of the Security Council, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Commission on the Status of Women.

15. **International Day of Peace:** A unique campaign — Txt4Peace — was carried out to raise awareness of the International Day of Peace on 21 September. Some 20 million messages were sent, most by mobile phone companies which distributed peace messages to their subscribers. More than 150,000 messages were collected from individuals in 140 countries and posted on www.peaceday.2008.org. Many of the messages were also displayed on the large monitors in the General Assembly

Hall before the general debate on 23 and 24 September and published in a booklet which was distributed to all Member States.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Manama** worked with a telecommunications company to send the Secretary-General's text message on the International Day of Peace to 700,000 subscribers.
- **The United Nations Information Centre in Nairobi** partnered with a mobile company, which received over 100,000 individual text messages on peace.
- **The United Nations Information Centre in Pretoria** partnered with a cellphone service provider to send peace messages to approximately 13 million subscribers in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and in southern Africa, including in South Africa and Swaziland.

B. The question of Palestine

16. Under the Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine, 10 Palestinian journalists (4 men and 6 women) participated in the Department's training programme for Palestinian journalists from October to December 2008, bringing to 132 the total number of Palestinian journalists trained since the programme began in 1995. The programme included a week-long Internet training session aimed at strengthening the skills set of the participants as media professionals, in part by providing them with the technical know-how to develop and maintain websites in Arabic, with special attention to accessibility issues.

17. The sixteenth International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East, which the Department organized in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs of Austria in Vienna on 2 and 3 December, was another key activity of the Programme in 2008. Approximately 150 participants took part, including Israeli and Palestinian political and civil society representatives, as well as journalists.

Box
"Peace is more than a photo-op"

One of the participants in the 2008 media seminar on the question of Palestine wrote in *The Jerusalem Post*:

> "A journalist from Jerusalem doesn't often get the chance to talk to a colleague from Algeria, even off the record. A chat with the Cairo Bureau Chief of *Al Arabiya* News Channel ... was also illuminating ... Peace is more than a signed document and photo opportunity. The aim should be to stop people from suffering and being killed ... We might not have made peace, or even danced together (in Vienna), but perhaps we had taken a step — or two — in the right direction."

18. In November, United Nations information centres and services in Brussels, Buenos Aires, Mexico, Moscow, Pretoria, Tokyo, Tunis, and Vienna, among others,

organized activities in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. A travelling version of the permanent exhibit on Palestine on display at United Nations Headquarters was produced in Arabic, English and Spanish.

19. Other activities include:

(a) The United Nations News Centre portal introduced a special "News Focus" segment on the Middle East;

(b) Frequently updated news stories were distributed by e-mail to over 54,000 subscribers;

(c) The Department's multimedia coverage of formal meetings and press conferences on the question of Palestine included 75 detailed meeting summaries in English and French during the reporting period.

20. **Crisis in Gaza:** In early January, during the crisis in Gaza, the Department initiated a communications strategy so that all public information spokespeople, including those in the Middle East, were in harmony in their communications. As part of this plan, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) held regular briefings inviting United Nations entities and partners in Jerusalem. The Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General hosted regular video press briefings featuring officials at Headquarters and in the field, including directly from Gaza. United Nations information centres and other United Nations field offices were briefed regularly with guidance on messages and activities of the Secretary-General, the Security Council, UNSCO, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly and others.

21. Throughout the Gaza crisis, the Department's News and Media Division provided thorough print, radio, television and photographic coverage of all events at Headquarters, including emergency sessions of the Security Council on weekends and evenings, and the resumed emergency special session of the General Assembly. Eighty-six press releases were issued during the first three weeks of the crisis. The United Nations News Centre portal carried over 90 stories during the same period. It also featured a special "Photo Story" slide show on the Secretary-General's trip to the region. A separate "Middle East" button on the webcast page was created, providing easy Internet access to United Nations Television coverage on the issue. The Arabic Unit of United Nations Radio provided clients and broadcast partners with multiple news reports, features and interviews daily. The Department's producers conducted interviews with officials working on the crisis on the ground and at Headquarters; these were posted for global audiences on the United Nations News Centre portal under its "Newsmaker" feature and distributed to broadcast partners via United Nations Radio's eight language units. United Nations Television worked with partners to get footage on and from the region for a series of Gaza-focused television packages distributed to broadcasters online and through satellite feed.

22. The Department also supported the Secretary-General's official visit to the Middle East with spokesperson services, photographic coverage — the United Nations photographer was able to feed back 39 images from Gaza and 5 images

from the Israeli border town — and media liaison support for the journalists accompanying him.

C. Human rights

23. The United Nations system-wide human rights advocacy campaign for the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a main focus of the Department's public information efforts over the reporting period.

- Materials produced at Headquarters, particularly the special sixtieth anniversary edition booklet on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, were widely utilized by field offices, NGOs and other partners for events around the world. Nearly 180,000 copies of the booklet were sent out from Headquarters throughout the year in all official languages.
- The KnowYourRights.org website developed by the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels served as a focus for organizations and individuals planning anniversary events, with the "Wall of events" feature including over 400 events from 55 countries. In addition, over 750 websites in more than 50 languages linked to the KnowYourRights.org website and the total number of page views for the campaign was more than 350,000.
- The official sixtieth anniversary website in all official languages was a key entry point for viewing and downloading campaign materials, with a total of more than 9,500 hits on the Campaign Materials page of the English site in the period March 2008 to January 2009. Overall hits to the English site during the same period totalled more than 1.4 million. Other language sites received steady traffic also, with more than 180,000 visits during this period to the French and Spanish sites, around 124,000 to the Russian site and approximately 30,000 to the Arabic and Chinese websites.
- The Department also created a new website, "UDHR: an historical record of the drafting process", which provides access to the full text of the historical documents of all meetings that led to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The annual Department of Public Information/NGO conference was held under the theme, "Reaffirming human rights: Universal Declaration at 60". Held for the first time away from New York, at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the conference attracted over 1,100 participants representing 65 countries from 461 NGOs.
- United Nations information centres were very active throughout the year in organizing events for the anniversary, ranging from a Human Rights Run with 2,500 students in New Delhi to a photography exhibition in Yerevan. For the first time, a parallel regional student conference was organized by the Information Centre in Mexico City with the participation of students from 14 countries that coincided with the Department's Annual Student Conference on Human Rights, held at Headquarters.

- A musical concert to observe the anniversary was organized by the Department in the General Assembly Hall, sponsored by the Government of Spain and featuring Messenger of Peace Maestro Daniel Barenboim and the West-Eastern Divan Quintet.
- United Nations Radio and United Nations Television produced topical reports on subjects ranging from the history of the Declaration — which included the use of historic audio — to features on the state of human rights today.

D. Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide

24. The Department's Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide launched a special online feature of the *Visions of Rwanda* photography project in six official languages, as well as in Kinyarwanda. The project brought together survivors of the genocide, taught them basic photography skills and enabled them to capture images of their daily lives, their memories, hopes and dreams for the future. A postcard in English and French was produced to promote the online feature. Work also began on the production of a travelling exhibit.

25. The "Lessons from Rwanda" travelling exhibit was shown in several locations, including at several universities in Rwanda, in partnership with the information office of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Kigali, and at two locations in Burundi. In partnership with the Government of Sweden's Levande Historia agency, the exhibit was adapted into a guide (in Swedish) for teachers of high school students. Two United Nations radio pieces highlighting the challenges faced by Rwandan widows, and reconciliation efforts in Rwanda were made available on the Programme website.

E. Millennium Development Goals

26. Promoting the Millennium Development Goals was a key focus of the Department in 2008. The Department worked closely with the relevant substantive offices and United Nations system partners to coordinate and promote the High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals (25 September) and the launches of three major reports: the recommendations of the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group (1 July), the first report of the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force (4 September) and the annual Millennium Development Goals Report (11 September). It also played a major role, along with the Millennium Campaign, in the "Stand Up and Take Action against Poverty and for the Millennium Development Goals" initiative.

27. The launch of the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group recommendations by the Deputy Secretary-General at the African Union Summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 1 July, jointly coordinated by the Department and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), received considerable media attention around the world, especially in Africa. The Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force report and the annual Millennium Development Goals Report 2008 were launched by the Secretary-General in New York. In addition, over 20 national or regional launches and curtain-raiser events for the High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals were organized by United Nations Information Centres, United Nations offices and UNDP offices.

28. For the High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals, the Department worked with its inter-agency partners to issue a press kit in English and French, including press releases and background fact sheets on each goal. The Department also redesigned the main Millennium Development Goals website (www.un.org/millenniumgoals) as a gateway to the United Nations system's work on the issue, with direct links to the relevant agency web pages. The site received on average over 5,000 daily visits in September and over 10,000 visits on the day of the High-level Event. A special website for the High-level Event offered continuously updated information about the more than 50 partnership events, as well as press materials, statements, news and a compilation of outcomes and commitments.

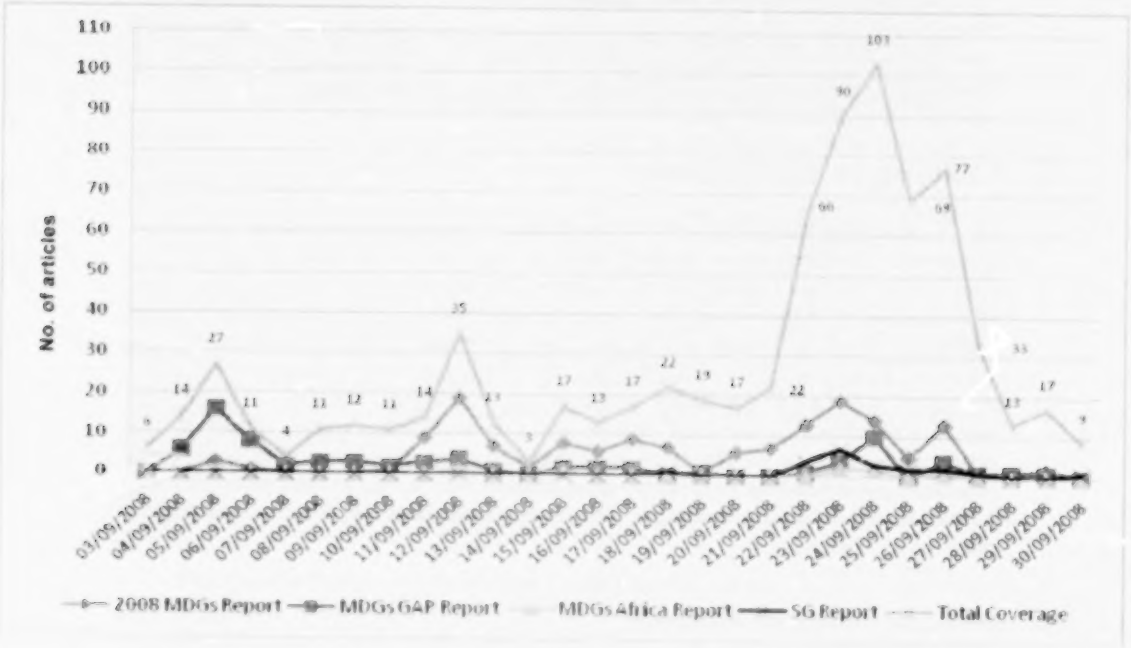
29. In coordinating efforts by communications partners to project a unified image of the purpose and outcome of the High-level Event and dozens of partnership events, the Department helped to ensure that the commitments made by Member States, United Nations system entities, philanthropic foundations and civil society organizations at a wide range of partnership events were compiled and issued as a press release on the day of the event. The coordinated communications campaign generated a positive media coverage, including in major international media such as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, focusing on the over $16 billion in commitments made.

30. The line-up of Millennium Development Goals reports and events succeeded in generating a voluminous amount of media coverage. Highlights include:

- A total of 767 clippings collected from 61 countries throughout September showed that more than 70 per cent of the coverage included at least one of the key United Nations messages, most often (in 27 per cent of all articles) "Donor countries must meet their aid commitments".
- The Secretary-General was quoted in 46 per cent of all clippings.
- The High-level Event was covered in 40 per cent of all articles collected, the Millennium Development Goals Report 2008 in 20 per cent, and the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force report in 10 per cent.

31. As expected, the last week of September registered the highest volume of coverage. The figure below demonstrates the central role played by the launches of United Nations reports in building up media interest for a major United Nations event.

Figure
Media coverage of Millennium Development Goals reports and events



32. The analysis of the coverage on the High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals illustrated the success of drafting clear and concise communications messages, proactively designed to work with the news of the day. The media campaign exceeded the Department's benchmark for key message penetration in media coverage by more than 10 per cent, with 71 per cent of the coverage including United Nations messages. At the same time, the analysis found that the large number of reports and side events during the week of the High-level Event competed with each other for media attention, rather than having a multiplier effect; only one of the numerous high-level side events, on malaria, which was designed with a specific media focus, was able to generate significant media coverage.

33. **Stand Up for the Millennium Development Goals campaign:** United Nations information centres played a key role in supporting the "Stand Up and Take Action" initiative led by the Millennium Campaign and its partners, mobilizing a record-breaking 116 million people, to literally "stand up" against poverty and for the Millennium Development Goals over a three-day period. Many "Stand Up" events received high-impact attention from national and local media, and generated innovative new partnerships with civil society and the public sector — building strong awareness and support for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Cairo** joined forces with Government and local religious leaders to mobilize 10 million people to stand up against poverty at weekly prayer services.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Manila** worked with the Government, enlisting support from the President of the country and her cabinet, and generating participation by some 35 million people.
- **In Belgium and South Africa**, United Nations information centre offices worked with soccer federations to mobilize tens of thousands of people at sports events to show their support for the fight against poverty.

F. Financing for development

34. Culminating the year's work on development issues, the Department mobilized to provide communications support both in the lead-up to, and onsite for, the International Review Conference on Financing for Development, held in Doha, from 29 November to 2 December. The Department prepared a press kit and daily press releases in English, French and Arabic, and generated extensive webcasting and broadcasting arrangements. Facilities and press briefings were organized for the 795 journalists who were accredited to cover the conference. Media coverage was particularly strong in the Gulf region and the developing world, linked to the participation of some 40 Heads of State and Government, mostly from developing countries. Arrangements were made for a studio to be set up at the conference site for Al-Jazeera, which ran extensive live coverage and interviews on both its Arabic and English channels.

G. Dialogue among civilizations

35. During the reporting period, the Department continued to provide communications advice to the secretariat of the Alliance of Civilizations, in cooperation with the Alliance's communications and public information team. The Department facilitated the recording of a Fox News programme on the Alliance's film fund. In November, the Department coordinated a meeting between the Alliance secretariat and visiting representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, regarding the 2009 Durban Review Conference.

H. Climate change

36. The Department continued to chair and coordinate the 17-member inter-agency United Nations Communications Group Task Force on Climate Change. The Task Force meets by videoconference and telephone every other month to share information, discuss strategy, develop communications products and coordinate messaging and activities, such as for the high-level events during the General Assembly and for the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Poznan, Poland, in December 2008.

37. The Department, on behalf of the Task Force, continued to update and improve the website, "Gateway to the United Nations System's Work on Climate Change", which serves as a portal to climate change information from across the United Nations system. Original reporting from the Poznan Conference was provided by the Department on this site.

38. The Department serves as a focal point on public awareness and communications issues for the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) committee on climate change and, in this regard, worked with the CEB secretariat to produce a booklet, "Delivering as one", on the activities of the United Nations system to address climate change. The publication was distributed to delegates and participants at the Poznan Conference. The Department also assisted the CEB secretariat in preparations for a side event in Poznan featuring the heads of United Nations system agencies, to demonstrate how the United Nations system is working together on climate change.

39. Media analysis conducted by the Department at the request of the Framework Convention secretariat, reviewing 1,306 articles about the Poznan Conference in 67 countries, showed that interest in the negotiation process remained very high in most regions, even though Poznan was not promoted as a conference where agreements would be reached or breakthroughs achieved. The bulk of the reporting was neutral, factual and geared to convey the positions of various countries in the negotiations and the state of play of the negotiations. Over 50 per cent of the coverage picked up key United Nations messages, particularly about the need for an agreement in Copenhagen.

40. The network of United Nations information centres continued to carry out various public information activities to highlight climate change, often targeting youth.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Canberra** hosted a conference on climate change and human rights at the Australian National University on 10 December 2008, with participants from the Pacific region, including Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Tuvalu.
- **The United Nations Information Centre in New Delhi** organized a sound and light show to convey climate change messages. The show drew over 1,000 visitors on its first day.
- **The United Nations Information Centre in Pretoria** invited high school students from four schools in Pretoria to participate in an international videoconference with schools in five other cities around the world.

41. In early 2009, the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels launched its second European public information campaign, entitled "CoolPlanet 2009". This web-based campaign will focus on climate change and will be modelled on the successful KnowYourRights campaign.

I. Violence against women

42. The Department worked actively to publicize the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November 2008, highlighting the Secretary-General's "UNite to End Violence against Women" campaign. The Department's multilingual website for the Day offered a range of materials and inter-agency links (www.un.org/events/women/violence/2008).

43. Media coverage of the International Day included articles by wire services such as Associated Press and Inter Press Service; major news outlets such as the BBC; women's magazines such as *Ms. Magazine*; and newspapers throughout the

world. Most articles focused on the announcement by the United Nations Development Fund for Women of the 5 million signatures gathered through its "Say NO to Violence" campaign. BBC News and *Ms. Magazine* explicitly referred to the Secretary-General's UNite campaign. The *Canberra Times*, Pakistan's *Daily Times*, the Philippines' *Global Nation* and South Africa's *Pretoria News* quoted the Secretary-General's call for stepped-up efforts "to combat attitudes and behaviour that condone, tolerate, excuse or ignore violence committed against women". The appointment of actress Charlize Theron as a United Nations Messenger of Peace, tasked with promoting efforts to end violence against women, was a story that received considerable attention.

44. The network of United Nations information centres marked the Day with numerous events, including:

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Bujumbura** co-organized a series of activities in southern Burundi to mark the Day and to launch the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence campaign on 25 November 2008, including a march on violence against women and children.
- **The United Nations Information Centre in Ouagadougou**, in partnership with the local branch of the Pan-African Association of Journalists, organized a conference on 22 November at the University of Ouagadougou on strategies and best practices to eliminate violence against women.

J. Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society

45. The Department continued to support activities conducted throughout the United Nations system in implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society. It contributed to media promotion of key activities of the Global Alliance for Information and Communications Technologies and Development, including the launch of a regional network of specialists in Latin America and the Caribbean to assist the region in using information and communications technologies to eradicate poverty.

46. Communications support was provided to the third annual meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Hyderabad, India, from 3 to 6 December. More than 200 articles in five languages were published about the Forum in national and international media. Through the use of extensive webcasts and transcripts provided online, technology reporters were able to cover the event remotely, a trend that the Department intends to promote in the future.

K. Africa, with special emphasis on the New Partnership for Africa's Development

47. Central to the Department's efforts to draw global attention to Africa's concerns were two major promotional campaigns carried out in the run-up to the September High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Africa and the High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals, a few days later. In partnership with the Office of the United Nations Special Adviser on Africa, the first campaign highlighted the key challenges to development in Africa, and to the implementation of NEPAD in particular. The campaign featured a press conference given jointly by

the Chair of the African Union and the President of the African Development Bank on the day of the high-level meeting. The second campaign measured progress on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa and promoted an understanding of what is needed to ensure that the goals will be met.

48. The public information impact of these campaigns was significant. The Department worked with the editors of some 90 of the most influential media in Africa. The United Nations information centres in Africa liaised directly with local journalists. Information centres in other countries were also successful in raising awareness regarding Africa's needs. Through the efforts of UNIC Lima, for example, the leading daily *El Comercio* published a full-page story about Africa's development and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as an interview with the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, on 15 October 2008. Analysis of the media coverage on the above high-level events, monitored throughout September 2008, found that 767 articles were published in 64 countries, almost one quarter of them in Africa. Some 70 per cent of all articles incorporated the United Nations messages. Africa's issues were covered in almost one half of all articles; 25 per cent mentioned Africa prominently; and the high-level event itself was mentioned in almost one fifth of the articles. NEPAD was referred to in 4 per cent of coverage. The media analysis found that the Millennium Development Goals are a central catalyst for coverage on Africa's development needs.

49. The Department's Africa Renewal short feature service, through which articles from the magazine are rewritten into shorter and more popular pieces that are then offered to editors on an exclusive basis in their country, helps to raise awareness of NEPAD throughout the year. Between July 2008 and February 2009, 449 pick-ups were monitored in some 245 different major media, primarily in Africa, and also in Asia and other regions, in English, French, Kiswahili and Portuguese.

50. The Department continued to work with its partners — including the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union and the NEPAD secretariat — to advance the efforts of the Advocacy and Communications Cluster of the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism for NEPAD, based in Addis Ababa. The first of the Cluster's joint activities, "Dialogue on NEPAD", took place in February in Johannesburg, South Africa. It was designed to give the senior journalists working in the African and international media based in Africa better access to the information and tools they need to inform Africans and others of the NEPAD vision, goals, challenges and achievements.

51. The Departments' publications, *Africa Renewal* and *Afrique renouveau* (see www.un.org/AR), continued to provide the underpinnings of much of the Department's work to promote NEPAD. Among the major articles published were several on the global food crisis and its implications for Africa, on climate change, as well as on the role of women in national development efforts.

Part two: The network of United Nations information centres

I. Introduction

1. The Department's network of United Nations information centres comprises 63 information centres, services and information components around the world. Giving a local accent to the global communications efforts of the Department of Public Information, these centres promote a better understanding of the work of the United Nations and therefore build support for it, working with local partners, including Government offices, media and civil society. In recent years, the work of United Nations information centres has come to be defined by three strategic thrusts:

(a) Closer partnership with the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the United Nations country team at the national level and strengthened cooperation at the regional level;

(b) Increased use of local languages;

(c) Expanded use of new information and communications technologies.

II. Expanding cooperation locally and regionally

A. United Nations information centres and United Nations country teams

2. Following an agreement reached between the Department and the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, United Nations resident coordinators who also serve as United Nations information centre directors have been assigned additional responsibilities, reflected in a new job description agreed to by the United Nations Development Group at the end of January 2009.[1] These include overseeing the programmatic work of the information centres and ensuring the management of the Department's human and budgetary resources. Resident coordinators are also advised to include in their annual reports the main developments in programme delivery relating to the work of the United Nations information centres as well as those relating to the United Nations country team communications priorities. United Nations information centres, in turn, are asked to support resident coordinators and United Nations country teams in the implementation of their communications priorities.

3. United Nations information centres often partner with United Nations country teams to commemorate special observances and events. To mark United Nations Day 2008, many information centres organized activities and projects with the United Nations country team and with national and local partners, including representatives of the host country. These activities included panel discussions, exhibits, film festivals, concerts, blood drives, radio programmes, student competitions, and school visits.

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[1] Presently, United Nations Resident Coordinators head 28 UNICs as well as 8 United Nations Offices where DPI maintains an information component.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Ouagadougou** coordinated a bicycle race on behalf of the country team and in partnership with the National Cycling Federation.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo** organized a climate change seminar and interactive events for children and adults, together with United Nations entities and offices in Japan.

- Many United Nations country teams also engaged in joint activities organized in connection with the Stand Up and Take Action against Poverty campaign. Several centres produce joint United Nations country team newsletters or websites on the integrated work of the United Nations system in their respective countries on an ongoing basis.

4. With the establishment of United Nations communications groups at the country level, interaction between United Nations information centres and the United Nations country teams has steadily grown, giving rise to a mutually beneficial relationship. With over 80 country-level communications groups now in operation, communications staff of United Nations field offices, in many cases led by information centres, are devising joint communications campaigns, media products and special events. Communications groups are also active at the regional level.

- **The United Nations Communications Group in the United Republic of Tanzania** has undertaken a campaign to train communications staff about effective message delivery. Between January and June 2008, it produced six issues of a newsletter that reflected the consolidated operation of the United Nations system in the country.

- **The United Nations Communications Group in Uruguay** issues a monthly newsletter, *Reform times in Uruguay*, which has emerged as a focal point for system-wide information on the "delivering as one" process in the country.

- **The United Nations Communications Group in Argentina** has a weekly electronic newsletter, *Novedades@UNCG*, which has become a useful tool for encouraging and strengthening communication within the Group, presenting updates of the United Nations country team website, including relevant news and statistics.

5. At the regional level, the Regional Communications Group for Latin America and the Caribbean, coordinated and convened by UNIC in Mexico City, held its third meeting in Mexico City on 18 and 19 February 2009 to discuss the modalities for the establishment of a regional communications platform and to consolidate strategies and tools to enhance the visibility and image of the United Nations system in the region. The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss coordinated inter-agency involvement in two key United Nations communications opportunities in the region this year: the observance of World Environment Day and the annual Department of Public Information-NGO Conference, which will take place in Mexico City in 2009.

B. Adding impact at the regional level

6. Efforts in recent years to encourage and strengthen greater interaction and collaboration among United Nations information centres within their respective regions have gained momentum, and are producing results. Translation tasks are shared, technical support for information technology uses and website content is provided, and participation in joint projects on priority themes across regions has increased.

- In Asia, all the United Nations information centres in the region (along with some United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) offices), collaborated with the United Nations Information Service in Bangkok in the launch of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific annual flagship report, *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific*.[2] There were 23 launches in total, 20 within the region, and the others in New York, Geneva and Moscow, which generated extensive media coverage.

- United Nations Information Service (UNIS) Vienna is working closely with information centres in the region. As a result of its collaboration with UNIC Prague, for example, more and more Czech student groups visit the United Nations Office at Vienna for briefings.

7. Through their webmasters, United Nations information centres in Cairo, Mexico City and Pretoria have greatly increased their collaboration with other centres within their respective regions in the area of information technology.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Cairo** has developed a standard website template and is working with other United Nations information centres in the region to make their websites more cohesive. It will also assist in the development of a regional website in the future.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City**, in collaboration with United Nations information centres in the region, has developed thematic regional websites on a variety of United Nations priority issues. It is also developing a regional website portal that will serve as a one-stop entryway into the information generated by the United Nations system in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- **The United Nations Information Centre in Pretoria** has also launched a new template for its website. In 2009, it plans to migrate the websites of other United Nations information centres in Africa to this template along with upgrades to their Content Management Systems. A few of the new features in the template include a prominent display of links to other United Nations information centre websites in the region in a bid to increase cross traffic, a sitemap to boost search engine placement, a simplified navigation system, and other visual aids to improve usability. UNIC Pretoria continues to provide website updates and regular technical support to other United Nations information centre offices in the region. Additionally, it has been assigned administrator and technical support duties of the unic.org e-mail system for all 63 United Nations information centre offices.

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[2] *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2008: Sustaining Growth and Sharing Prosperity* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 08.II.F.7).

C. Reaching target audiences in local languages

8. The network of United Nations information centres is key to the Organization's efforts to reach people around the world and to share the United Nations story with them in their own languages. The centres currently have the capacity to work in 48 languages and have produced information material in over 130 languages. Information centres inform local audiences about the activities and goals of the Organization using traditional media, such as radio, television, newspapers and print materials, as well as new information and communication technologies, including the Internet and videoconferencing. Many centres partner with the local broadcast media and several have established arrangements for a regular newspaper column or page devoted to United Nations issues. The placement of op-eds by the Secretary-General and other United Nations senior officials in major newspapers/media outlets and in local languages raises the visibility of the Organization and its work. Through the combined efforts of its staff in New York and at United Nations information centres, in the course of 2008, 29 op-ed pieces, 13 of them by the Secretary-General, were published. The articles, which addressed many of the most urgent challenges facing the international community, appeared in a total of 482 newspapers and online news sites around the globe in a wide range of languages.

9. For the 2008 International Day of Peace "Txt4Peace" message campaign, the United Nations Information Service in Bangkok partnered with mobile phone companies to send peace messages in English and Thai to 1.7 million subscribers, while the United Nations Office in Yerevan arranged for the Secretary-General's text message, translated into Armenian, to be sent to 600,000 subscribers of a local mobile phone company.

- The Secretary-General's message for United Nations Day 2008 was translated into many languages, including Armenian, Bahasa Indonesia, Czech, Danish, Dutch, German, Greek, Finnish, Hungarian, Italian, Myanmar (Burmese), Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Swedish, Thai and Ukrainian. The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels presented the Secretary-General's United Nations Day message to the members of the European Parliament in most of the 22 European Union languages in which it works.

- In December 2008, the United Nations in Mexico (UNIC Mexico City, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme), together with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples and the National Institute on Indigenous Languages, launched a two-year initiative to translate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into more than 20 indigenous languages of Mexico. The first two translations were in the Maya and Mexican Huasteca Hidalgense languages.

- To mark Human Rights Day 2008, the United Nations Information Service in Vienna organized an event where the full text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was read out loud in 31 different languages, including Amharic, Fijian, German, Myanmar (Burmese), Punjabi, Ukrainian and Uzbek.

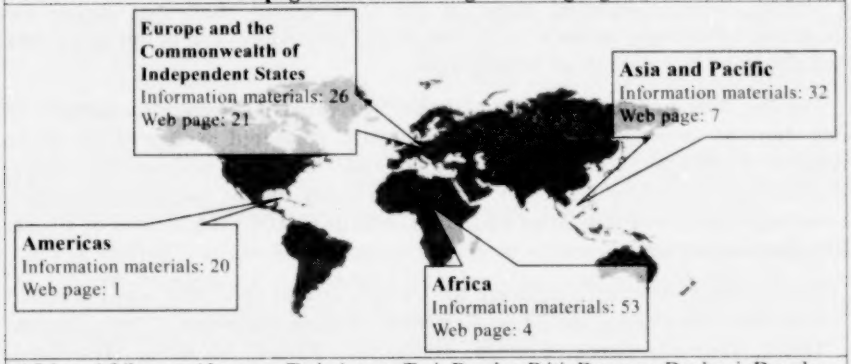
- The United Nations Information Centre in Lusaka provided local language translations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to participants at a Human Rights Day event in December 2008. The languages included Bemba, Chewa, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Nyanja and Tonga.

10. The United Nations information centres website (http://www.un.org/aroundworld/unics) was launched in October 2008 in six official languages. It prominently features publications and other information materials translated by information centres into over 130 local languages (see figure below). In addition, the "Voices from the Field" feature provides short video clips of information centre staff describing the work they do and highlights of information centre materials produced in local languages.

11. Currently, 35 information centres produce their own newsletters/bulletins, either on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. In addition to English, these are produced in 12 local languages: Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali/Bangla, Czech, Georgian, Hindi, Japanese, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Romanian, Turkish, Ukrainian and Urdu.

Figure

United Nations information centres produced information materials and maintain web pages in the following local languages



Africa: Afrikaans, Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi, Bemba, Béti, Dagaare, Dagbani, Dangbe, Dhoulo, Dioula, Ekegusii, Ewe, Fante, Fulfulde, Ga, Gonja, Hausa, Igbo, Kabye, Kaonde, Kasem, Kikamba, Kikuyu, Kiluhya, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Kituba, Lingala, Lozi, Lunda/Chokwe-Lunda, Luvale, Malagasy, Mandinka, Moore, Ndebele, Nyanja/Chinyanja, Nzema, Pidgin-English, Pulaar, Seereer, Sepedi, Sesotho, Shona, Siswati, Soninke, Tonga, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Wolof, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu.

The Americas: Aguaruna, Ashaninca, Aymara, Embera, Guarani, Kuna, Mapuzugun, Mayan, Mexicano de la Huasteca Hidalguense, Mixteco, Nahuatl, Ngabo, Portuguese, Qom, Quechua, Shipibo-Conibo, Toba, Tojol-a'b'al, Tzeltal, Tzotzil.

Asia and Pacific: Achehnese, Bahasa Indonesia, Balinese, Bengali/Bangia, Bhojpuri, Bugisnese, Cebuano, Chin (Falam), Chin (Hakha), Chin (Tiddim), Dzongkha/Bhutanese, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Japanese, Javanese, Karen (Pwo), Karen (Sgaw), Kashmiri, Madurese, Magahi, Minangkabau, Myanmar, Nepali, Persian, Sanskrit, Shan, Sindhi, Sinhala, Tamil, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese.

Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Armenian, Azerbaijani, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Faroese, Finnish, Georgian, German, Greek, Greenlandic, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Kazakh, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Sami/Lapish, Slovak, Slovenian, Swedish, Turkish, Ukranian, Uzbek.

III. Greater use of new information and communications technologies

A. Expanding the use of information and communications technologies

12. The Department is actively using new communications tools such as instant messaging and web conferencing to coordinate tasks, exchange information, foster team building and knowledge capture between staff of its headquarters and field offices. These tools allow the Department to send and receive instant text messages over the Internet and use them for frequent, informal interactions with colleagues around the world cost-effectively. It is also taking advantage of the power and flexibility of using Web 2.0 platforms to strengthen internal collaboration with its field offices.

Box

Using new information technology tools: United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City

Over the last year, the United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City made considerable strides in applying the latest information technology tools to its day-to-day operations, allowing it to expand its support to the United Nations country team in Mexico and to other United Nations information centres in the region. Examples include:

- Hosting point-to-point and multi-point videoconferences between United Nations offices in the region and other United Nations stakeholders, including Government representatives and civil society organizations
- Expanded use of blogs, Google video, postings on You Tube, Facebook and other social networks to bring its work and key United Nations issues to untapped audiences
- Enhanced reliance on webcasting to make key press conferences and other events available online in real time. Media logging-in from distant locations around Mexico and the region can now follow the events in the United Nations Information Centre media room and ask questions by e-mail. Webcasting has also been used to extend the audience for United Nations Information Centre briefings and information training sessions beyond participants on the ground.

B. Training for United Nations information centre staff

13. The Department continues to focus its attention on strengthening the capacity of United Nations information centres so that they may more effectively serve the Organization's communications objectives. To achieve this, the staff of information centres must be equipped with the knowledge and tools that they need to

successfully operate in today's media environment, and training is a crucial element in this regard.

14. In 2008, the Department arranged for nine librarians from information centres to attend a library workshop at Headquarters conducted by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and for seven webmasters to attend a project management workshop under the external training programme. By including staff from centres that have been given a greater regional role, namely, Brussels, Cairo, Mexico City and Pretoria, the Department has sought to "train the trainers", enhancing their ability to provide guidance and technical assistance to other centres within their respective regions. As an example, those centres in sub-Saharan Africa without technical staff now send their news and images to the webmaster at the centre in Pretoria to update their websites remotely.

15. In January 2009, seven information officers from information centres in Asia attended a capacity-building workshop on communications and media relations, including during crises. Their participation in this intensive hands-on workshop, made possible with the use of funds from the Office of Human Resources Management for external training, should help these staff to better engage the media around particular issues, thereby increasing public support and visibility for the Organization.

16. Given the challenges of providing training opportunities to field staff, the Department is currently working with the Office of Human Resources Management to explore a variety of online and other options.

IV. Ongoing challenges

A. Physical conditions at United Nations information centre premises

17. Limited resources available to the Department for the operations of its field network have left many United Nations information centres in urgent need of physical renovation and technological upgrading. The majority of United Nations information centres are also located in countries where climate impacts on the condition of office premises. Efforts to improve physical and working conditions of information centres continue to be a challenge, at the same time that the Department is also increasingly devoting resources to security enhancements for information centre premises. In some cases, relocation of information centre premises is required based on the recommendations of the Department of Safety and Security.

B. Bringing the United Nations message to countries not covered by United Nations information centres

18. In its effort to cover Member States currently not served by the network of United Nations information centres, the Department has actively pursued cooperation with other United Nations field offices and their host Governments.

19. On the occasion of the International Day of Peace 2008, the United Nations Governance Centre, a Department of Economic and Social Affairs office in Seoul, spearheaded the "Txt4Peace" campaign in the Republic of Korea. Diverse civil society and student volunteer organizations formed the Korean Organizing

Committee for the International Day of Peace. Their activities included the screening of the Secretary-General's video message for the Day, dissemination of information material, online campaigns and local media coverage. Syndicated Korean cartoonist Wonsoo Lee contributed two cartoons for free promotional use. During the 10-day campaign, 2,000 peace messages were collected through e-mail, websites, telephone and street campaigns. Likewise, for United Nations Day 2008, the United Nations Governance Centre replicated the Department's educational campaign for students.

20. The UNDP Office in Beijing partnered with the Department and received hundreds of online peace messages through its dedicated website on the International Day of Peace.

C. Communications needs of the Portuguese-speaking countries

21. The Department fully recognizes the importance of addressing the communications needs of the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. While the Department appreciates the offer by the Government of Angola for the provision of rent- and maintenance-free premises for the establishment of a centre in Luanda, it should be noted that it is not possible for the Department to cover the related and considerable one-time and ongoing costs of an additional centre within the existing resources currently appropriated for the global network of United Nations information centres.

22. It should nevertheless be recalled that the Portuguese Desk at the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels provides information materials on a daily basis to all United Nations offices operating in Portuguese-speaking countries.

V. Conclusions

23. **The story of the United Nations is an enduring one. As the world's foremost universal organization, it promotes peace, fights poverty and protects those in need. Conveyed through print, audio, video and the Internet, this story has a global appeal and must be told to the widest possible audiences in a form and content best suited to the local population. The Department's strategic communication services have been promoting the United Nations story by pursuing well-defined and targeted delivery of information products and activities. By building partnerships with United Nations system organizations through the United Nations Communications Group, it has also found practical ways to coordinate its messaging, avoid contradiction and eliminate duplication.**

24. **The network of United Nations information centres, located in 63 countries, is responsible for bringing the story of the United Nations to local audiences. Using new information and communications technologies and increasingly speaking in languages used locally, United Nations information centres serve as a vital link between the Organization and its global audience. Through careful planning and coordinated efforts, United Nations information centres are now better equipped, better prepared and better organized in locations where they serve.**

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Activities of the Department of Public Information: news services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The overarching goal of the news services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information remains the production of a broad range of news and information on the activities and priorities of the United Nations system and its timely delivery to the widest possible audience. In a rapidly changing media and information technology environment, the Department has adapted its products and enhanced its delivery systems to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its clients in all regions of the world for text, audio, visual and photo products. While maintaining traditional forms of distribution, the Department has advanced the delivery of news and information about the United Nations through the Internet, a medium that continues to reach an ever-expanding audience around the globe.

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 63/100 B, summarizes the key advances made by the Department during the period from July 2008 to February 2009 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its news and media services.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/100 B, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called on the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information, which met in November 2008, advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services. The present report, submitted for consideration by the Committee at its thirty-first session, addresses the news and media services provided by the Department of Public Information and incorporates such areas as United Nations Radio and Television, meetings coverage and press releases, the United Nations website, including the news portal, and services to the media. It also contains a section on the impact of the capital master plan on the Department's news and media services. Unless otherwise indicated, the present report covers the activities of the Department for the period from July 2008 to February 2009.

II. News services: a focus on timely delivery to the widest possible audience

3. The overarching goal of the news services programme of the Department remains the production of a broad range of news and information on the activities and priorities of the United Nations system and its timely delivery to the widest possible audience. In a rapidly changing media and information technology environment, the Department has adapted its products and enhanced its delivery systems as necessary to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its clients in all regions of the world for text-based, audio, visual and photo products. In particular, while maintaining traditional forms of distribution, the Department has advanced the delivery of news and information about the United Nations through the Internet, a medium that continues to reach an ever-expanding audience around the globe.

1. United Nations Radio

4. United Nations Radio continues to harness new technologies to deliver news, features and programmes to a wider global audience. With newly programmed websites, United Nations Radio now provides more frequently updated content to its worldwide clients, serving in one capacity as an audio news service that delivers sound bites and short news reports/bulletins, and in another as a provider of in-depth features and magazine programmes.

5. The more frequent updating during the day of news on the actions of the General Assembly and Security Council, or on developments away from Headquarters, has proved particularly popular with broadcast partners. Distribution through the Internet means that United Nations Radio clients can receive more timely material through MP3 files that deliver much better audio quality than

traditional telephone distribution. The sound bites and short news pieces or features are easily placed and scheduled into the daily output of radio stations.

6. The Chinese, Kiswahili, Portuguese and Spanish Language Units are now distributing all their content using the Internet. This delivery strategy allows for the better measurement of downloads, enabling United Nations Radio to continually evaluate the use of its material. All Language Units added new partners during 2008. The Spanish Radio Unit has seen a significant increase in new partners in Latin America, adding more than 60 during the reporting period; more than 80 new stations in Africa and Brazil have been downloading radio programming in Portuguese; the Kiswahili Radio Unit has added five new partners; and the Chinese Radio Unit has found new partners in Australia and the United States of America. To keep broadcasters informed, the Arabic, Kiswahili, Portuguese and Spanish Language Units send out e-mails calling attention to breaking news and stories of interest, thus alerting partners to flexible content they can place in their own programmes. As another service, some Language Units, such as the Chinese Unit, occasionally do live link-ups with partners to give them fresh updates on major news.

7. While placing strong emphasis on expanding the number of clients, United Nations Radio is also strengthening ties with its current partners. Not all stations can receive material via the Internet, and United Nations Radio continues to work closely with its partner stations to ensure that they receive material by traditional means where necessary.

8. United Nations Radio has continued to report on the broadest possible range of United Nations activities and issues; highlights of its coverage over the reporting period include:

(a) The High-level Meetings of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals and on Africa's Development Needs;

(b) The Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, held in Doha;

(c) The commemorative plenary meeting of the General Assembly devoted to the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

9. United Nations Radio also devoted an array of reports and special features to the issues of climate change, the food crisis, the subsequent global financial crisis and wider concerns related to economic and social development. In an effort to spotlight issues and crises that often go underreported, it produced a series of features in connection with the Department's project "Ten stories the world should hear more about".

2. United Nations Television

10. Ensuring access to United Nations news and information for the growing global television audience is another priority of the Department. United Nations Television provides live coverage of events at Headquarters that is accessed directly by major international television news agencies, including the Associated Press Television News (APTN), the Agence France-Presse and Reuters TV), as well as by a number of large broadcasting organizations.

11. The Department is also supplying global broadcasters with feature material on United Nations activities and issues. Through its two main series of programmes, the magazine show *21st Century* and the *UN in Action* series, the Department has highlighted priority themes and issues, including development, the eradication of poverty, peace and security, HIV/AIDS and human rights. Africa, a principal concern of the United Nations, was the subject of more than one third of the *UN in Action* output, for example, while more than one quarter of *21st Century* programmes dealt with environmental issues. The Department produced special videos for the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, and, for the sixtieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping, a video entitled *In the cause of peace*, which is available in three languages.

12. An important dimension of the work of United Nations Television is its coordination with partners throughout the United Nations system, which is aimed at promoting a comprehensive and coordinated presentation of the work of the Organization. United Nations Television has cooperation agreements with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund, among many others, which help to generate story ideas and ensure the resources and access necessary for the generation of programming. In this way, United Nations Television acts as a "window to the world", highlighting United Nations success stories and issues that mass-media outlets would otherwise not cover.

3. United Nations Television programmes on YouTube

13. The proliferation of platforms for the delivery of video material through the Internet presents opportunities for the Department to reach new audiences, particularly young people. To that end, in 2008 the Department established a creative partnership with YouTube/Google, launching two new outlets for video material on the activities of the United Nations. The first is the United Nations channel on YouTube (www.youtube.com/unitednations), launched in August 2008. The channel is updated regularly with United Nations features and statements by the Secretary-General and other senior officials of the Organization. The channel also allows YouTube users to embed United Nations video into their own websites, thus expanding considerably the potential audience for United Nations videos highlighting major issues on the agenda of the Organization.

4. UNifeed

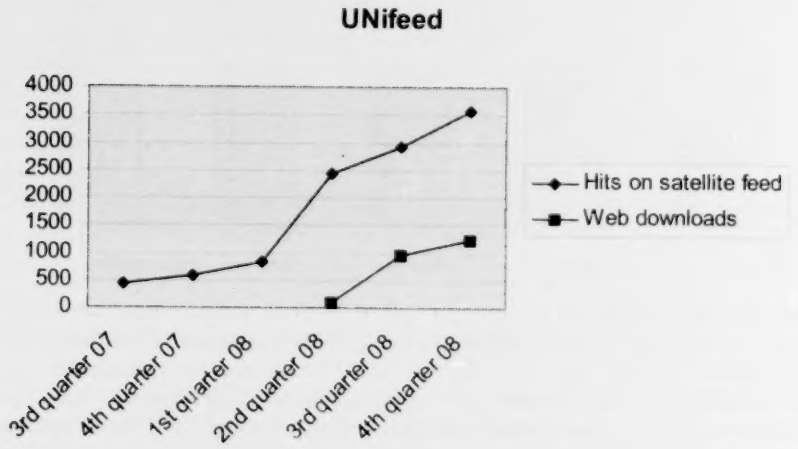
14. UNifeed was established in 2005 as an inter-agency platform to provide global television broadcasters with single-source access to video news stories from all members of the United Nations Communications Group. United Nations Television, UNICEF, the World Bank, United Nations peacekeeping operations and 19 other United Nations entities contribute to UNifeed, serving major national broadcasters in all regions, including Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, BBC, CCTV, Channel NewsAsia, CNN, Deutsche Welle, Euronews, France 24, Russia Today, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), TVE (Spain) and TV5.

15. In 2008, UNifeed entered a new phase. In addition to distributing news stories on its 10-minute daily satellite feed via APTN, the European Broadcasting Union and Reuters, in June UNifeed launched a new website offering stories for download in broadcast-quality PAL and NTSC via the Internet. An outside web-hosting solution, procured through a combination of existing resources and a contribution from the World Bank, optimizes the use of bandwidth and reduces network bottlenecks resulting from data traffic congestion, allowing users to download large video files in a timely fashion.

16. The new website is expanding UNifeed's reach by serving additional media outlets that do not have access to the APTN feed, in particular smaller outlets and broadcasters in developing countries. For example, SABC uses the UNifeed website daily. Users affiliated with Al-Jazeera, African Caribbean Television, CNN, EFE (Spain), Gigacable radio (Mexico), IHA (Turkey), PBS, Reuters, SBS (Republic of Korea), USA Radio Network, 3A Telesud and TV Slovenija are among the website's top media users. This additional means of distribution, along with an expanded production and editing team at Headquarters, made possible through cooperation with other departments, now enables UNifeed to deliver news items throughout the day, as they become available. By the end of 2008, UNifeed was turning out more than 100 stories per month.

17. Teletrax, which monitors many (though not all) stations using UNifeed material via satellite, shows that UNifeed news stories aired at least 11,651 times in 2008, a fourfold increase over the previous year. In addition, 2,182 stories were downloaded in broadcast quality from the UNifeed website (see fig. I). Stations in some 57 countries across all continents, ranging from Austria and Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Russian Federation, China and India, Egypt and the Sudan, and Colombia and Mexico, are using UNifeed material.

Figure I



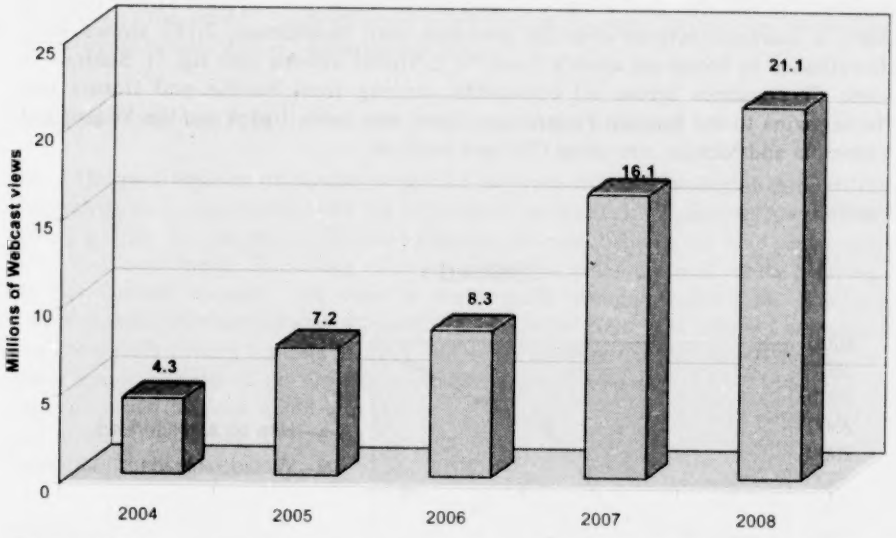
18. The packages that generated the most media pickup were those offering exclusive or breaking news coverage. Examples from the reporting period include stories from the ground in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, the Sudan,

Zimbabwe and Gaza. Coverage of activities at United Nations Headquarters and carefully timed news features also generated high levels of media interest. Examples include coverage of Security Council meetings and press conferences on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Somalia, the Sudan and Gaza; and news features produced for the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the XVII International AIDS Conference, held in Mexico, and the fourth anniversary of the tsunami in South Asia.

5. Webcasting

19. The growing importance and global reach of video via the Internet is reflected the audience for the Department's webcasting of activities at United Nations Headquarters and elsewhere. To capitalize on the synergies in the use of traditional broadcast and new media technologies, the United Nations Webcast Unit was relocated to the Television Section of the News and Media Division in January 2009, enhancing the Department's ability to deliver United Nations messages live and on demand on multiple platforms and devices.

Figure II
United Nations Webcast usage: 2004-2008



20. In 2008, the number of accesses to United Nations webcast material rose by more than 30 per cent, to some 21 million from some 16 million video views (live and on-demand) in 2007 (see fig. II). In total, 17,122 separate video clips were created in 2008. As users from over 200 countries and territories access video clips, webcasting reaches a truly global audience, demonstrating its effectiveness in bringing to viewers instant information and an awareness and a better understanding of the work of the Organization, as well as of the positions of individual Member States on various issues.

21. In addition to live and on-demand webcast coverage of Security Council and General Assembly meetings, press conferences, briefings and other meetings and events at United Nations Headquarters, the Department in 2008 provided webcast coverage of other United Nations conferences, including the twelfth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in Accra; the Financing for Development Conference, held in Doha; and the sixty-first annual conference of the Department of Public Information for non-governmental organizations, held in Paris. Furthermore, as it did in 2006 and 2007, in 2008 the Department provided live and on-demand webcast coverage (speaker by speaker) of all 11 sessions of the Human Rights Council, held in Geneva, including the universal periodic review and preparatory meetings for the Durban Review Conference. The cost of webcast coverage of the Human Rights Council was met, albeit with difficulty, within the existing resources of the Department, both in New York and Geneva, as well as through the voluntary contributions of Member States, which continue to be essential to ensure that complete and uninterrupted speaker-by-speaker coverage of all Human Rights Council sessions is provided.

6. Promoting multimedia products

22. The new web-hosting solution (see para. 15 above) has enabled the Department to improve the web delivery of photographs and audio, in addition to video. With server access points across the globe, the new platform ensures faster and more reliable access to radio and photo content. It has also helped to broaden the Department's geographical reach; tens of thousands of high-resolution photographs are now being downloaded by users in 135 countries, representing an exponential increase over previous usage. The additional storage capability of the web-hosting solution has enabled United Nations Radio sites to make available a vast archive of recent and historical audio programmes (see www.unmultimedia.org; click on UN Radio Classics).

23. In conjunction with the new web-hosting arrangement, this year the Department upgraded related web applications in order to obtain a wealth of useful statistical information on users and usage patterns. The Department's high-resolution photos are being used by press organizations, government agencies, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations; broadcast-quality audio files were downloaded by users in 118 countries during the reporting period; and the United Nations Television UNifeed video packages on the web were downloaded by partners and users in 57 countries. By analysing data such as the origin of requests and the level of demand for particular products and stories, the Department obtained more accurate information and improved its production planning.

7. Radio, television and photographic archives

24. The Department is entrusted with unique audio-visual materials consisting of approximately 55,000 hours of film and video recordings, 80,000 hours of audio recordings and 600,000 photographs documenting more than 63 years of the work of the Organization.

Box 1
United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law

Together with the Office of Legal Affairs, the Department created and launched a unique library of audio-visual materials related to the evolution and codification of international law, including the essential role that the United Nations has played in advancing the rule of law. Throughout 2008, the Department retrieved and helped to digitize historical audio, photographs, film and video materials of legal relevance that constitute the core contents of the Office's website. The Department also produced 100 video lectures by internationally recognized experts in international law. The lectures, which cover a vast array of subjects, represent a priceless collection of legal thought and analysis from the world's leading scholars and practitioners. The historical archives project was launched in a ceremony held at United Nations Headquarters on 28 October 2008.

25. In anticipation of the capital master plan, the Department of Public Information used funds from the associated costs monies made available to outsource the digitization of the legacy United Nations photo collection (215,000 slides and negatives), so that the full collection can be safely kept in and retrieved from servers, which will prevent loss or damage during the capital master plan construction period. The Department is continuing to seek additional funding for the digitization and cataloguing of the corresponding photo captions. At the same time, it is making every effort to digitize its unique audio material. The branded UN Radio Classics is one of the favourite offerings on the multimedia website, with 1,412 downloads from 65 countries during the period from July to December 2008.

26. Because of the impending capital master plan, the Department is conducting a detailed and complete inventory, appraisal and selection of the audio-visual collection to support its effective digitization and relocation off-site. The identification work is being done with the assistance of specialized archivists who have been temporarily engaged. The Department will ensure that its audio-visual archives are preserved and made accessible to future generations.

Box 2
Feedback

Television stories produced by the Department of Public Information and broadcast to the global audience are continuously monitored both through feedback from broadcasters and through statistics gathered by Teletrax, a global monitoring system. Examples of the feedback received by the Department from television stations include:

- "Excellent monthly programme" (Israel Broadcasting Authority)
- "Thank you for your great work" (Canal Futura, Brazil)
- "Delivery is excellent and on time" (BBC, United Kingdom)

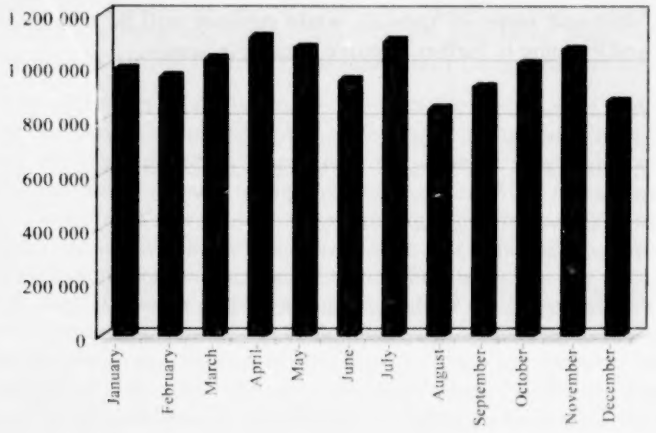
8. United Nations News Centre

27. The United Nations News Centre, long one of the most popular portals on the United Nations website, attracted an average of nearly one million unique visitors per month in 2008, with spikes during peak news periods (see fig. III). The redesigned site's accessibility and interactive elements have resulted in a broader audience reach, further demonstrating the effectiveness of the Internet in reaching a global audience with timely news on United Nations affairs. The redesigned version of the site is currently available in English and French, and the Department is continuing to work on similar redesigns in other official languages.

28. New features of the United Nations News Centre introduced in 2008 include the "Newsmakers" segment, launched in November, in which senior United Nations officials are interviewed about issues prominent in the news. The first interview featured the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, speaking on the situation in Darfur and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In December, at the onset of the crisis in Gaza, an interview was conducted with the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, Karen AbuZayd, which provided a first-hand account of the humanitarian situation there at a time when on-the-ground coverage was limited. Another new feature has provided regular photo stories on issues in the news, including, in December, "Year in Review 2008: Pictures from the UN".

29. Other forms of news distribution featured on the United Nations News Centre, such as Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, also enjoyed steady growth. The number of subscribers to the associated e-mail news alerts service continued to grow, reaching 55,000 (English and French) by mid-2008. However, continuing technical issues have affected the service and its expansion to all official languages. The Department, together with the Office of Information and Communications Technology, continued to explore ways and means of resolving those problems, which will require a significant upgrading of the technical underpinning of the service.

Figure III
English News Centre: monthly visits in 2008



9. Press releases

30. The Internet, as well as distribution directly to media at Headquarters and to other regions through the United Nations information centres (UNICs), is crucial to the Department's continued ability to provide fast, accurate, balanced and comprehensive coverage of all open intergovernmental meetings and press conferences at Headquarters and at other locations. Between July 2008 and January 2009, the Department's meetings-coverage operation produced a total of 2,482 press releases, with 13,357 pages in English and French, including end-of-year round-ups of Security Council and General Assembly actions. That output, made available in hard copy at Headquarters and distributed to worldwide audiences via the Internet and United Nations information centres, included:

(a) 430 press releases on meetings coverage summaries for the sixty-third regular session of the General Assembly, from mid-September to December 2008;

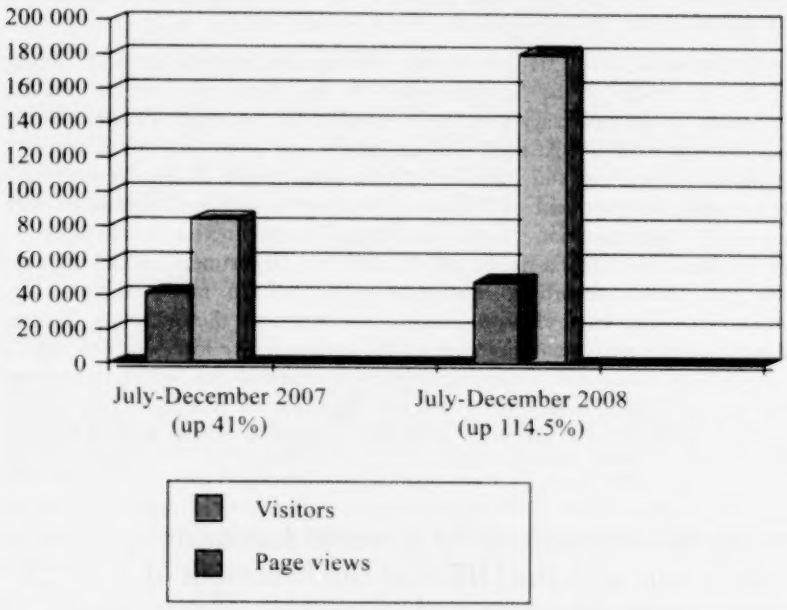
(b) 238 press releases on the Security Council, including on several late-night and weekend meetings on Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, the Middle East and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur;

(c) More than 700 press releases on statements by and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as on material from other United Nations offices and departments;

(d) 249 summaries of press briefings of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General at Headquarters.

31. There was also a significant increase in access to the press releases on the United Nations website. The period from July to December 2008 saw a 114 per cent increase in the number of page views over the same period in 2007, from 84,400 to 181,000 (see figure IV). In order to further improve service and delivery to its clients, the Department is in the process of implementing a newly structured website and a sophisticated database search function, resulting in part from comments and suggestions collected in surveys and group discussions with delegations from Member States and representatives of the media and non-governmental organizations — key users of United Nations meetings coverage summaries and press releases. The search function, for example, will enable users to search by keyword, topic, date and name of speaker, while releases will be displayed both chronologically and by topic to further improve document access.

Figure IV
United Nations meetings coverage/press release website



III. Liaison with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

32. The Department works on a systematic and daily basis with both the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General to ensure coherent and coordinated messaging on United Nations issues. Senior officials of the Department meet every morning with colleagues from both Offices and relevant departments to review developments that have occurred over the past 24 hours and to assess possible upcoming developments. Such meetings take place in the context of regular, more strategic planning of communication priorities, centred both on the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Communications Group, chaired by the Department.

33. The close working relationship between the Department and the two Offices focuses in particular on the formulation and implementation of a coordinated strategy dealing with crisis messaging, the strategic positioning of the Secretary-General and priority issues facing the Organization. Such messaging is conveyed to all the Department's news operations and information centres. The Department's news operations at Headquarters consult with and draw guidance from the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General throughout the day to ensure that United Nations communication outputs accurately reflect the Organization's position on the latest Organization-related developments. In addition, the Department, in coordination with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and relevant departments, has systematically developed more detailed messaging and communications guidance on

major issues dealt with by the Organization and ensured the timely dissemination of such information to United Nations Communications Group members, United Nations information centres and other United Nations field offices, as well as to other United Nations media personnel.

34. The Department, in particular United Nations information centres, works closely with the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to support the Secretary-General during his official visits abroad. UNIC staff provide media and communications support, including media monitoring and liaison with the local press. To ensure that such visits run smoothly, Department of Public Information staff have cooperated with the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General in the development of guidelines for the Department's field staff. In addition, Department and UNIC staff liaise with that Office regarding interview requests from media outlets. The Department's news staff have also on occasion accompanied the Secretary-General on his visits to ensure maximum coverage of the issues before him. For example, a senior television producer and a cameraperson accompanied the Secretary-General during his trip to Asia (China, Japan and the Republic of Korea in July 2008), feeding daily coverage to international and domestic broadcasters as well as to news syndicators.

IV. Publicizing the activities of the General Assembly and cooperation with the Office of the President of the General Assembly

35. The Department has assisted the Office of the President of the General Assembly in the development and maintenance of its website. A comprehensive site based on the President's press kit, also produced by the Department, was developed in the six official languages and launched at the time of the opening of the sixty-third regular session of the General Assembly.

36. The Department provides guidance on web best practices, technical support and troubleshooting to assist the President's Office in the development of new content in English while ensuring ongoing development and maintenance for the other language versions.

37. The Department also prepared and disseminated, in both print and electronic form, a press kit on the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session. The press kit, which included a biography and a photograph of the President, as well as material on the upcoming session and on past Presidents of the Assembly, was produced in print form in English, French and Spanish. Electronic versions of the press kit were made available in all official languages to United Nations information centres and distributed to all United Nations associations and to non-governmental organizations related to the Department of Public Information and the Economic and Social Council. They were widely used and adapted for posting on the websites of non-governmental organizations.

38. The Department's Strategic Communications Division worked closely with the Office of the President of the General Assembly to promote the Assembly's high-level events, thematic debates, special sessions and commemorative plenary meetings. The Division has also developed and implemented communications

campaigns on thematic issues as mandated by the Assembly, including in the areas of development, human rights, the question of Palestine, decolonization, gender issues, and peace and security.[1] Various news outlets of the Department also continued to give regular and extensive coverage of the work of the Assembly, including the activities and statements of the President. The Department also loaned a staff member to serve as spokesperson for the President of the General Assembly. Furthermore, as part of its efforts to bring additional media attention to the work of the Assembly and the activities of its President, the Department used the opportunity presented by major news events to set up media stakeouts at the entrance to the General Assembly Hall.

V. Other services

1. Support to the media

39. From 1 July 2008 to 9 January 2009, the Department processed 706 permanent and 2,046 temporary press accreditations and distributed 130 media alerts to 3,700 media organizations, press attachés of Permanent Missions and others in the United Nations system. The Department also conducted 20 tours for groups of students and professional journalists and provided information and logistics assistance for 720 media stake-outs. During that period, 229 press conferences/briefings were held, attended by 5,329 journalists.

40. In order to facilitate the work of the press officers of Member States during periods of heightened security such as the opening of the General Assembly session, the Media Liaison and Accreditation Unit has initiated a badge identification system with the Department of Safety and Security that will allow press officers to move more freely through security checkpoints.

2. Placement of op-ed articles

41. The Department of Public Information continued to assist in the placement of opinion pieces by the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials in newspapers and other media outlets around the world. Through the combined efforts of its staff in New York and at United Nations information centres, from June through December 2008 14 op-ed pieces, seven of them by the Secretary-General, were published. The articles, which addressed many of the most urgent challenges facing the international community, appeared in 236 newspapers around the globe, in a wide range of languages. For example, a June 2008 article by the Secretary-General entitled "The Real UN" was carried by 44 newspapers and media outlets worldwide. An op-ed by the Secretary-General timed to coincide with the July 2008 Summit of the Group of Eight, held in Toyako, Japan, was published simultaneously in major newspapers in all eight countries of the Group.

[1] See A/AC.198/2009/2.

3. "Ten stories the world should hear more about"

42. The Department launched its fifth annual list of "Ten stories the world should hear more about" (available at http://www.un.org/events/tenstories/) in March 2008, with the aim of drawing increased media attention to issues worthy of greater exposure. Covering a wide range of international concerns, the 2008 list highlighted issues including conflict situations, crime prevention, food security and the protection of human rights. The "Ten stories" website, in all official languages, drew significant traffic as well as inquiries from the press and the public.

VI. The United Nations website: steady progress

43. The United Nations website achieved an increase of more than 17 per cent in the total number of page views to the website as a whole (www.un.org). The overall number of monthly page views rose from a total of 39,000,000 in 2007 to 45,649,075 in 2008 (see fig. V). The various language sites achieved different growth rates, ranging from 1.5 per cent for the Arabic site to 8 per cent for the English site. Views to the French site rose by 6.8 per cent, while the Chinese, Russian and Spanish sites each registered an increase of 5 per cent. The notable increase overall in the use of the website was, in fact, even greater than the above statistics suggest, as they do not reflect accessing practices such as page caching. Further, the statistics do not take into account the fact that a number of important high-volume days were lost because of a breakdown of the server.

44. Usage of the United Nations website was also adversely affected when the entire site was shut down for a number of days in August 2008, when measures were taken to enhance its security. Another factor affecting year-to-year comparison was the move of the Department of Public Information's multimedia pages to an outside hosting solution to facilitate faster downloads of broadcast-quality files without overloading currently available bandwidth.

45. The continued analysis of website traffic is a critical element in the process of learning more about user preferences and thus catering to their requirements. Robust and sophisticated analysis tools, including real-time traffic monitoring, are essential for effective website management. The Department continues to explore options to meet that need within existing resources in order to better provide users of the United Nations website with the service they seek.

Figure V
Page views and visits to the United Nations website, 2008

1. Multilingualism and parity among languages

46. As part of its responsibilities in terms of providing project-management services for many new and existing sites, the Department is in daily contact with author offices, always emphasizing the need for the content of their websites to be available in all six official languages, in keeping with the resolutions of the General Assembly. There has been notable progress in adding new pages to the website. However, given the fact that far more pages are available in English and that offices are continuingly adding pages in that language, the number of new pages in English is still higher than the number of pages added in the other languages. Unfortunately, therefore, the process of achieving parity among languages remains a difficult challenge. In some areas, progress has been steady, and in key information areas on the website such as news, one of the most visited areas of the site, significant strides have been made in enhancing the multilingual nature of the site.

47. Exemplifying the Department's efforts to achieve parity, the nearly 13,000 new pages created by the Web Services Section in 2008 are fairly evenly spread across all six official languages (see table below). The production of both new and updated web pages was helped by pro bono partnerships with academic institutions:

(a) Zhejiang University in China provided 400 translated pages in Chinese;

(b) Minsk State Linguistic University in Belarus translated 210 pages into Russian;

(c) The Spanish website had a very high number of pages updated, partly as a result of the services of volunteers and interns, and of the work of two teams of faculty and students at the University of Salamanca in Spain, which delivered 1,893 pages translated into Spanish.

48. The quality of the output improved over time as the students working on the translations gained familiarity with United Nations terminology. The Department is continuing to try to enlist the support of an institution of higher learning for pro bono translations into Arabic. Overall, the process of web-page updating is crucial to keeping the United Nations website timely, but the considerable resources required for this effort make the task of achieving linguistic parity even more difficult.

Table
New pages created and pages updated in 2008

	Arabic	*Chinese*	*English*	*French*	*Russian*	*Spanish*[a]
New	2 085	2 568	2 024	2 126	2 101	2 083
Updated	4 525	5 680	5 121	4 642	5 414	10 730

[a] The number of updated pages for the Spanish website is very high because the Spanish Language Unit had the services of a number of volunteers and interns during the course of the year.

49. Additional cost-neutral ways to extend cooperative arrangements with academic institutions for website translation are currently being sought, including various opportunities for financing United Nations internships for student translators, such as using scholarships from the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Spanish Ministry of Culture. The Department continues to liaise with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management concerning the possibilities presented by automatic translation in terms of accelerating the processing of news-based and other materials into the official languages.

2. Taking a multimedia approach

50. As the Department continued its efforts to capitalize on the synergies of a truly multimedia approach to the presentation of essential content, its coverage of the general debate of the General Assembly during its sixty-third session offered another illustration of the effectiveness of this approach. The United Nations website pulled together a number of the Department's outputs, including photos, text and video, and created a separate page for each of the participants in the debate, featuring a photo of the speaker taken by United Nations photographers, the video file produced by United Nations Television and the United Nations Webcast Unit, a summary of the speech issued as a press release, and the full text of the statement posted online by a specially set up scanning operation. Statements can now be located by means of an alphabetical list of speakers, in addition to the meeting-by-meeting listing. Usage of the United Nations website was extremely high; during the first three hours of the first day of the general debate (9 a.m. to 12 noon), users around the world viewed more than 240,000 web pages. On that day, a new record was also set for the volume of data transferred from the United Nations website, which reached a total of 101 gigabytes (see also www.unmultimedia.org, which brings together all media on one site).

3. United Nations website enhancement and governance

51. The Department began the task of revamping the top layers of the United Nations website more than a year ago. Initially, the plan had been to launch the redesigned site under a new content-management system. Owing to delays in the identification, planning, procurement and subsequent implementation of such a system, the Department decided to go ahead with the redesign within the current platform. To that end, consultations are ongoing with the Office of Information and Communications Technology on the modernization of the technological infrastructure of the United Nations website.

52. Consultations have also taken place within the Department and with content-providing offices on the basic principles of the redesign. In line with the agreements reached, the top layers of the website in all official languages have been redesigned to present information about the Organization and its various activities in a way that is more coherent, engaging and user-friendly, as well as accessible to people with disabilities. The new design incorporates a common branding element that fits in well with any content style. Improved navigation, related cross-links and colour-coding of groups of pages have been implemented. Users are now able to access content with fewer clicks. Additional areas of the site will be migrated to the new template-driven design in the coming months.

53. In parallel with the revamp, a new companion site for mobile devices is being readied for launch. It is currently being tested for compatibility in all languages. This is part of a wider effort to disseminate material through new forms of technology. The Department is exploring new ways to deliver more content on demand in the form of podcasts and video podcasts (vodcasts) and to make it easier for consumers to share United Nations material with others on social networking sites.

54. A robust and secure content-management system remains vital to the systematic and coordinated enhancement of the United Nations website. Its benefits are highlighted in detail in section VI of the 2007 report of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2007/3) and in section VII of the 2008 report (A/AC.198/2008/3). It should be recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 63/262, approved $2 million for enterprise content management, including the United Nations Internet site project, and requested the Secretary-General to meet those requirements from within the overall resources appropriated for the biennium 2008-2009. Accordingly, the foundation is being laid for the United Nations website to move to the new system over the course of the next few years.

55. Once a content-management system is in place, a centralized template will ensure organizational branding and lay down specific presentational requirements. The challenge will be to allow for the flexibility and creativity that author offices require to meet the needs of their particular audiences — be they government officials, the media, academia, civil society or the public at large — while also ensuring a unified technical infrastructure, consistency in presentation and organizational branding, as well as fulfilling the dual mandate of producing material in all official languages and addressing accessibility needs. To that end, the Department has worked closely with the Chief Information Technology Officer and the Office of Information and Communications Technology to link the implementation of a content-management system with the adoption of a more robust governance

system that will gradually put in place the policies and standards required for a new environment for web-page generation.

56. The United Nations website is a strategic tool with which the Organization can reach out directly to the peoples of the world. It is therefore important to establish and follow a rational, effective and enforceable governance model that is flexible enough to evolve in response to advances in technology. At the same time, it is also necessary to ensure that technology remains an enabler of the content and responds accordingly.

57. The purpose of web governance is not to discourage or bureaucratize the use of the website as an organizational tool, but to ensure that our decentralized Organization establishes a coherent presence in cyberspace. The objective is to encourage offices to establish their own web pages linked to and consistent with the main United Nations website; establish responsibility and accountability for content on the various sites; achieve a United Nations "look and feel" without over-standardization; and avoid duplication and ensure cost effectiveness in the use of this fast-growing medium.

58. Based on the experience gained during the 13 years that the United Nations website has been in operation, the Department, in consultation with the Chief Information Technology Officer, has proposed the establishment of a two-tier governance mechanism for the website, which has been approved by the Office of the Secretary-General.

59. The highest tier of this two-tier governance mechanism for the United Nations website is the Internet steering committee, established at the level of Under-Secretary-General. The committee is assisted and supported in its functions by the Working Group on Internet Governance, which will oversee the setting of standards and their implementation and will replace the current Working Group on Internet Matters of the Publications Board.

60. The committee will meet quarterly, or on an as-needed basis, to review and approve policies, projects and standards; ensure that content and technical aspects are coordinated and that technology is used as an enabler of content; approve technical and content standards for issuance as administrative instructions and/or Secretary-General's bulletins; ensure that proposals are congruent with programme strategy and are adequately resourced; take final decisions on their implementation; review cases of non-compliance with standards, policies and mandates referred to the committee by the Working Group, and decide on an appropriate course of action to bring about compliance, including attaching a time frame for such compliance and, if necessary, sanctions.

4. Accessibility by persons with disabilities

61. The Department of Public Information continues to ensure that the United Nations website is accessible by persons with disabilities, including visual and hearing disabilities, with a view to making information about the United Nations and its activities available to the widest possible audience. All new web projects are designed to meet accessibility requirements, complying with the World Wide Web Consortium standards, which at present are the only standards with worldwide recognition and acceptance. The additional efforts necessary to create the new pages

and to validate them against the standards have required additional production time, which has increased by at least 20 per cent.

62. As resources permit, older pages are corrected to address accessibility issues. The diagnosis and correction of accessibility barriers in existing pages is a process that is more time-consuming than the creation of new accessible pages. Therefore, the Department has been working to raise awareness of this issue, so that the accessibility factor is taken into account at the initiation of a project.

63. In adopting the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 13 December 2006 (resolution 61/106), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to implement progressively standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services of the United Nations system. To assist departments and offices across the Secretariat in producing accessible web content, a task force has prepared technical standards to build accessible United Nations websites. The draft was shared among web professionals within the Secretariat, accessibility advocacy organizations and other specialized agencies and offices of the United Nations system, such as the International Telecommunication Union and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The final version is now available online at www.un.org/webaccessibility. Based on those standards, the Department has provided advice and expertise to other entities, departments and offices across the United Nations system, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Economic Commission for Europe. These standards will be promulgated through the Standards Working Group of the Information and Technology Board.

VII. Capital master plan

64. The Department has undertaken extensive planning, both internally and with key departments upon whose services it depends, to ensure business continuity throughout the period of the capital master plan. Implementation has already begun in some areas, and it is clear that the Organization as a whole, and the Department specifically, face a number of challenges in ensuring the maintenance of the quality service its clients expect.

65. The daily coverage operation for meetings at Headquarters, which involves multiple deadlines and sudden scheduling changes, faces particular challenges. Hourly and daily production and dissemination requirements involving television, radio, text, Internet and photographic services involve a complex nexus of factors such as physical access and adjacency; close liaison with other Departments, such as the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Department of Safety and Security, and dependency on the continuing functioning of broadcast and information technology infrastructure, responsibility for which lies outside the Department.

66. The Department is continuing its intensive discussions with the capital master plan secretariat and other relevant offices to ensure that all coverage teams have ready access to meetings. The staggered relocation of staff to different areas within and outside the complex represents a particular challenge. The Department has worked closely with the relevant departments to ensure that its information technology requirements, in terms of both local networking systems and access to

external clients, via web, cable and satellite feeds, are understood. Anything short of a smooth transfer from present arrangements to new information technology connectivity and setups would have a serious impact on the various production and dissemination operations. Even measures already taken by the Department to ensure reliable service to clients, such as the external hosting of web-based multimedia products, would be affected.

67. Similarly, the Department has stressed the importance of ensuring the close proximity to the Headquarters campus of offices dealing with the external media, including the Office of the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General and the Media Liaison and Accreditation Unit. In addition, it has worked closely with the capital master plan secretariat to ensure the provision of adequate working space for accredited external media, and with the capital master plan and other departments to ensure connectivity to the necessary infrastructure to enable them to maintain coverage of the United Nations.

VIII. Conclusions

68. **Dramatic developments in the world of information and communications technologies and their quick adoption by the Department of Public Information have enabled it to spread the messages of the Organization rapidly and in a cost-effective manner, by means of radio, television and the Internet. The increase in traffic to the United Nations website during the reporting period is a clear indication of its popularity and usefulness. On average, the website registered over a million page views per day. The United Nations News Centre alone attracted an average of nearly one million unique visitors per month in 2008.**

69. **Despite such impressive strides, the Secretariat continues to lag behind in achieving parity among official languages on the United Nations website. While overall progress has been achieved, the growth of English-language content on the website has outpaced that of the site's language versions. With Member States calling for parity among all official languages, the Department of Public Information will continue to work with departments in the Secretariat to turn the United Nations home page into a truly multilingual source of information.**

70. **Another challenge facing the Department is the maintenance of uninterrupted media services during the implementation of the capital master plan. The Department has already made adequate preparations to ensure ready access to meetings by all coverage teams. However, given the complex nature of its Web and multimedia operations, smooth and uninterrupted service will require both vigilance and continued support from all sides.**

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Activities of the Department of Public Information: outreach services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In the course of the past year, the outreach services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information has enhanced and diversified the range of its programmes, products and services for Member States, civil society, youth and the general public. Doing so with fresh energy and purpose, it has taken advantage of the possibilities and proven performance inherent in traditional methods of outreach, as well as the potential of newer means, including the spontaneity and agility of electronic communication.

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 63/100 B, summarizes the outreach services of the Department from July 2008 to February 2009, including those aimed at students, teachers and civil society. The report also summarizes progress towards multilingualism and looks at the impact of the Capital Master Plan on the Department's outreach services. The report includes an annex, which presents a progress report on the Department's proposal for a news magazine, "UN Affairs".

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/100 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirtieth session (A/AC.198/2008/2 and A/AC.198/2008/3), and requested the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called on the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information, which met in November 2008, advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services. The present report, submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its thirty-first session, addresses the activities of the outreach subprogramme and includes such areas as new outreach initiatives, educational activities, visitors' services and library services. In separate sections, the report looks at progress towards multilingualism and the impact of the Capital Master Plan on the Department's outreach efforts. The report also includes an annex, which presents a progress report on the Department's proposal for a new journal, "UN Affairs".

II. A mission to engage and inform the public

3. In its resolution 63/100 B, the General Assembly stressed "that the primary mission of the Department of Public Information is to provide, through its outreach activities, accurate, impartial, comprehensive, timely and relevant information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization with the greatest transparency". The mission of the Outreach Division of the Department, which is responsible for the outreach services subprogramme, is to engage and educate people and their communities worldwide to encourage support for the ideals and activities of the United Nations.

4. In the course of the past year, the Department has enhanced and diversified the range of its programmes, products and services for Member States, civil society, youth and the general public. Doing so with fresh energy and purpose, it has taken advantage of the possibilities and proven performance inherent in traditional methods of outreach, as well as the potential of newer means, including the spontaneity and agility of electronic communication. These have allowed its mission of reaching out to be complemented by the capacity to listen to, and learn from, varied constituencies in the larger interests of the Organization, its purposes and its principles.

5. This ability to respond and to receive has been invigorated by a new structure in the Outreach Division, with a clear focus on projects and objectives that are global, coherent, sustainable and that command impact. They involve working across occupational sectors and identifying viable partners, within and outside the Organization. This focus is reflected in a number of new initiatives which have been launched by the Department in the second half of 2008.

III. New outreach initiatives

6. On United Nations Day 2008, the Department launched "UN4U", where individual speakers took the Organization's story to an estimated 3,500 students in 21 New York City public high schools in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. This model — of proactively reaching out to and visiting interested institutions, rather than awaiting their request for a talk or briefing — has been shared with information centres worldwide for a similar effort in 2009 and beyond. For visitors to United Nations Headquarters, a redesigned tour route, which wraps around the General Assembly Hall, integrates a range of new thematic exhibits. Access to complimentary tour tickets has been simplified, now allowing eligible United Nations staff, personnel of permanent missions to the United Nations and retirees to take a no-cost guided tour and extending to staff members and mission personnel a 20-per cent discount for their guests.

7. As of 16 October 2008, the Guided Tour operation began shifting to a full-time staff of 28 guides, now classified as Public Information Assistants with better contractual benefits than had been provided under the earlier "Agreement on Occasional Employment" contracts. The changes in the contracts for the guiding staff were requested by them, and implemented after agreement was reached between the Office of Human Resources Management, staff representatives and Department of Public Information management.

8. Approximately 2,000 visitors to Headquarters on 9 and 10 October 2008 had the opportunity to participate in the first UN Book Days, which was opened by the Secretary-General. Thirty agencies showcased their publications and other materials. The event, including presentations by United Nations departments and entities, became a true forum for librarians, academia, teachers, students, delegates, businessmen and the public at large. Based on its success, the event is scheduled to be held annually, with the venue rotating between New York and Geneva.

9. The Department initiated a new collaboration with one of the Organization's earliest partners, Rotary International, which was present at the San Francisco Conference in 1945. Working with Rotary's local chapters, the Department has sent speakers into the field, reaching over 3,000 Rotarians between March and December 2008.

10. In collaboration with the Strategic Communications Division, a global text-messaging campaign and website for the 2008 commemoration of the International Day of Peace were launched in September 2008. The Txt4Peace website facilitated the gathering of messages of peace via text or short message service (SMS) messaging to be presented to the General Assembly. A number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) globally supported and participated in the project, which included the facility to send and receive messages through the website from and to anywhere in the world. The campaign was accompanied by links from specially created pages in social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter.

11. Txt4Peace is also a key feature on a redesigned UN Works website, which also portrays the efforts of celebrities to communicate the work the United Nations is doing, and can do, in the field. To further the achievement of common goals of promoting peace and raising awareness of critical global issues, a Creative Community Outreach Initiative has been launched. Building on successful

collaborations such as *The Interpreter* and *Che*, this initiative will provide film, new media, television and documentary producers around the world with access to information about the work of the United Nations and its priority issues, as well as offer logistical advice and assistance.

12. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library has developed a new research tool, the United Nations Member States Wiki, to organize and provide access to a range of information about the United Nations activities of Member States, including dates of membership, sponsorship of draft resolutions and major statements. This Wiki will also be accessible to the wider public, in particular scholars and students, who will also benefit from a special project, launched in 2008, to convert into digital formats the Library's collection of the United Nations Oral History Project interviews with eminent persons from the early years of the Organization.

13. In this drive to make information on the Organization easier and swifter to access, the online version of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* was launched in October 2008. The new website — unyearbook.un.org — provides free public access to all the printed volumes of the *Yearbook* collection, detailing the work and achievements of the United Nations system over the first 60 years of its existence (1946-2005). New useful features will be added, as will later volumes as they become available. The new site incorporates a search function, allowing users to locate any *Yearbook* reference using key words, phrases or document symbols, by year or range of years. Search results can be displayed in plain text or as a printable PDF file. It is expected that the new website will not only serve as a strong research tool, but it will also help users better understand global issues as they affect them today.

14. A new programme — the Academic Impact — will be formally launched during the course of 2009. This initiative will create a global network of universities worldwide that will make commitments to promote the Organization's priorities, undertake programmes in their support and contribute ideas to their fulfilment. The initiative has received expressions of support and interest from a number of organizations, universities and institutions worldwide. These efforts targeted to the research and learning communities reflect the particular focus of the Department's outreach services on youth, detailed in section IV of the present report, which will also broaden the Organization's outreach to the public, increasing awareness of, and support for, the United Nations throughout the world.

15. Vital to that mission are the Department of Public Information/NGO Weekly Briefings at Headquarters which have introduced new elements to enhance interactivity and relevance. A series entitled "May I ask a Question..." will feature high-level United Nations officials in conversation with the non-governmental audience. As will be detailed later in the present report, the 2008 DPI-NGO Conference was held for the first time at a venue outside United Nations Headquarters. For the first time, the Conference had a host country organizing partner, the Government of France, which bore some of the costs of the Conference convened in Paris. The 2009 DPI/NGO Conference will be held in Mexico and the overarching theme will be disarmament and international peace.

IV. Reaching young audiences

16. The organization of the first annual Global Model UN Conference is a new and dynamic element in the outreach programme to youth being undertaken by the Department, with partners including the World Federation of United Nations Associations, the United Nations Foundation, the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships and United Nations information centres. It will be held in Geneva, from 5 to 7 August 2009, on the theme "The Millennium Development Goals: lifting the bottom billion out of poverty". The Government of Switzerland has offered a financial contribution to the organization of the Conference.

17. The planning process for the Global Model UN Conference was initiated in September 2008 with the creation of five intradepartmental planning committees and outside partners and stakeholders. Some of the committees are led by youth with experience in organizing Model UN conferences. In order to launch the programme, the Department developed a comprehensive database of Model UN conferences and programmes worldwide over the summer months. A media launch was organized in September and a webpage (www.un.org/gmun) was launched.

18. The Global Model UN Conference promises to be the most extensive outreach to youth ever undertaken by the Department of Public Information. Invitations have been extended to 323 university-level Model UN programmes and very enthusiastic responses have been received from students around the world. Apart from the educational and promotional value, the Conference offers an opportunity to highlight best practices of Model UN experiences on the organization and work of the General Assembly and other United Nations deliberative bodies system-wide. It is also expected to encourage the organization of Model UN conferences in countries where they do not currently exist.

19. The Department continues to engage young people worldwide on important issues on the United Nations agenda through its programme of international student conferences and videoconferences organized around United Nations observances. The Global Teaching and Learning Project, of which the United Nations CyberSchoolBus website is an integral part, remains the Department's premier vehicle for outreach to children and youth as well as teachers who develop curriculum on the United Nations. It is currently accessed from more than 200 countries and territories with an estimated 3.5 million page views per year. The Project will launch two new lesson plans on small arms in partnership with the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

V. Building upon, and furthering, successes

20. For the twenty-eighth consecutive year, the Department invited a group of young journalists from developing countries to New York to participate in the Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme. Three print (including "new" media), three radio and two television journalists participated in briefings at Headquarters, visits to media organizations, and meetings at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and in the Atlanta, Georgia, Headquarters of CNN. The Department has found the six-week time frame to be optimum to accommodate this schedule of activities. Countries selected for the 2008 programme were Brazil, Gabon, Israel, Jordan, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Somalia, South Africa and

Turkey. Since its inception in 1981, some 346 journalists from 160 countries have participated in the Programme. In recent years the number of participants has been reduced due to increased costs.

21. The pivotal element in the Reham Al-Farra Fellowship Programme is the opportunity for participants to meet, and converse with, diverse representatives of the United Nations system, in line with the continuing effort to make officials available for briefings.

22. In 2008, the Speaker's Bureau, in response to requests from the public, arranged 803 in-house briefings, 26 videoconferences, and 65 outside speaking engagements, reaching over 55,000 individuals. Almost a million visitors each year view the rotating roster of public exhibitions curated and installed by the Department in the Headquarters Visitors' Lobby. In 2008, 34 exhibits were displayed in partnership with a number of sponsors — from both within and outside the Organization. Exhibit themes included climate change, the environment, health, HIV/AIDS, indigenous rights, mine awareness, human rights, the question of Palestine, peacekeeping, youth, development, tolerance and world peace.

23. The last elements were particularly reflected in two other programmes. The Department coordinated the Stand Up and Take Action against Poverty and for the Millennium Development Goals campaign at Headquarters on 17 October and the annual United Nations Day Concert on 24 October 2008, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of China, with a performance by Messenger of Peace Yo Yo Ma and his Silk Road Project Ensemble. The Messengers of Peace Programme promotes United Nations issues and programmes through the special efforts of celebrity advocates. The Department provides the Messengers of Peace with updates on issues of importance to the Organization and encourages them to engage in outreach on these issues.

24. The Department also chairs a semi-annual policy guidance meeting for United Nations system focal points for Goodwill Ambassadors, in the interests of consistency among the various programmes, and to share information and best practices. At present, the 10 Messengers of Peace designated by the Secretary-General are joined in advocacy efforts by 170 Goodwill Ambassadors named by individual programmes, funds and agencies. The Department aims to ensure that these appointments are limited to individuals who not only are highly distinguished in their fields but also have demonstrated their commitment to supporting the work of the United Nations and its family of organizations.

25. This commitment is also readily evident among many of the NGOs affiliated with the Department. Building upon this, an active campaign to diversify the geographic representation of the NGOs in association with the Department is under way. As the Annual DPI/NGO Conference is taken on the road, there will be a new focus in mobilizing NGOs from the region where the Conference will be held. The network of United Nations information centres will be playing a key role in being proactive in inviting NGOs in their region to associate with the Department. In this vein, the Department also works to identify NGOs that no longer meet the criteria of association. A list of NGOs that have not communicated with the Department for at least three years has been sent to the relevant Department of Public Information field offices. An online survey has also been sent to gather feedback on these NGOs, their financial and ethical standing as well as their capacity to disseminate and

generate information relevant to the Organization. The NGOs that no longer meet the responsibilities which they accepted upon affiliation will be disassociated.

26. The Department responded to 24,901 communications from the public, which included 5,011 letters, 4,042 e-mails, 1,213 telephone calls, and 3,072 walk-in visitors, as well as 10,658 petitions on various subjects. The general information website (www.un.org/geninfo) registered 4,294,209 page views in the six official languages. Another electronic resource of information, and debate, are the online editions of the *UN Chronicle*. The Department has also published an updated edition of *Sixty Ways the United Nations Makes a Difference*, which is being distributed worldwide and is being translated in all the United Nations official languages, as well as in non-official languages to extend its reach. Work also continues on finalizing the sixtieth edition of the *Yearbook* covering activities in 2006.

27. Graphic designers have played a significant part in branding and creating the artwork for many of the Organization's outreach programme. The highly successful UN4U design helped to promote United Nations Day activities around the world in many languages. In collaboration with other departments involved in the publication process, the Graphic Design Unit also self-published a step-by-step guide that explains how to design, print and publish in the United Nations system, which has been a useful guide to clients. This ready access to process and procedures is intended to support the Department's commitment to ensure coherence, identity and quality in the "look and feel" of print products produced in and by the Organization.

28. *UN Development Business*, a self-financing print and online procurement publication, issued almost 9,500 procurement notices during 2008, working with 16 entities (including the World Bank and other multilateral development banks, the United Nations and government agencies) and reaching over 1,000 subscribers in over 100 countries. Over the past half year, a number of efficiencies have been introduced into the operation, most significant of which is a new database for the editing of procurement information that is scheduled to be implemented early 2009. As part of a wider outreach campaign, all United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country offices, as well as Permanent Missions to the United Nations, have been approached to support promoting *United Nations Development Business* through the building of key partnerships.

29. Significant progress has been made in the project to outsource sales warehousing and customer service activities with the completion of a comprehensive bidding process and the selection of a vendor. The move of the warehouse is now scheduled to take place in the second quarter of 2009, thus avoiding much of the disruption that was anticipated from the Capital Master Plan. Unified warehouse operations will not only reduce operating costs but will help to direct resources to enhance promotional and outreach marketing activities.

30. In an effort to provide more effective outreach for the sale of United Nations publications, a three-tier pricing system has been endorsed by the United Nations Publications Board, at the initiative of the Department, which chairs the Board. The new policy addresses differences in purchasing capacity around the world by instituting special "developing country" and "least developed country" prices. As a result, each sales item produced by the United Nations has a three-tier pricing — list price, developing country price and the least developed country price. Developing country prices are calculated by applying a 50-per cent discount to regular list prices and the least developed country prices by applying a 75-per cent discount. The

policy went into effect on 1 July 2008 and is expected to further increase worldwide dissemination of United Nations publications.

31. In line with this refocus on the needs of less and least developed countries, the marketing programme for the New York and Geneva sales offices has been unified. Also, in an effort to increase its outreach activities in the developing countries, the Department has broadened its participation in the professional book fairs taking place in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, in 2009, it will for the first time take part in book fairs and related events in Cameroon, Ghana, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Arab Emirates, among others.

32. 2008 saw the continuation of a multifaceted marketing programme. The e-commerce driven website received more than 30,000 unique visitors per month, while approximately 200,000 publication catalogues, 30,000 flyers and 30,000 bookmarks were disseminated under the direct marketing plan. The United Nations Bookshop has continued to play its important outreach role by targeting professional and general audiences through its e-commerce driven website and at its retail outlet conducting almost 80,000 transactions and organizing and supporting 35 special events at United Nations Headquarters. These events, and "meet the author" programmes at the Bookshop, also offer necessary and important opportunities for staff members to explore ideas and learn about activities outside their immediate areas of professional responsibility.

33. Significant progress has also been made in furthering the One United Nations initiative through internal communications designed for the Secretariat. In October, iSeek, the Secretariat Intranet, reached an important milestone in its development by bringing on board Beirut, the last of eight large-staff duty stations to have iSeek as the Intranet page appearing on computer screens when opening the web browser. The early December completion of the iSeek Global Access Fast Forward Initiative added iSeek access to more than 100 new sites around the world. All 44 Field Offices of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the 63 United Nations information centre sites, 7 subregional offices of the five regional commissions and 3 Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean) all now have iSeek access.

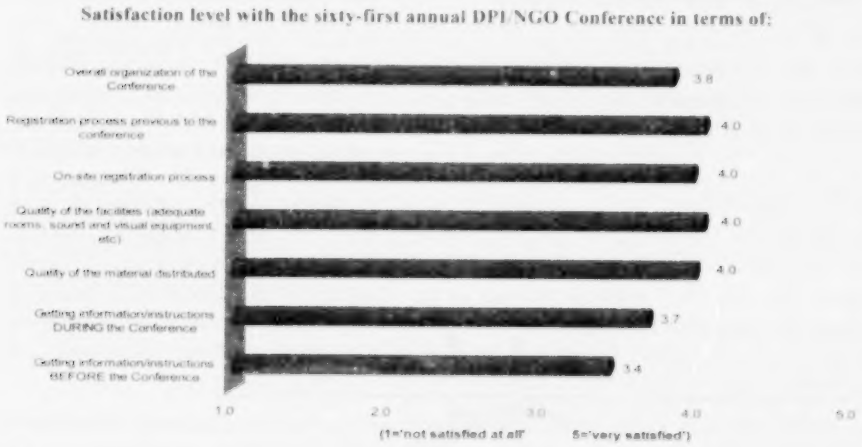
34. The Department has also begun an institutional memory project in cooperation with the Department of Management. The project will look into ways of preserving institutional memory using a Wiki and will capture the processes involved in the various daily tasks undertaken by staff members Secretariat-wide. Two knowledge management events were organized in 2008, including a two-day forum, organized with the office of the Chief Information Technology Officer, on the theme "Learning to manage with knowledge", attended by more than 20 knowledge management specialists from within the United Nations system. The alerting tool, UN Pulse, is used as a tool by United Nations information centres and depository libraries and others interested in the Organization to track important new reports.

VI. Activities relating to Human Rights[1]

35. Following an active campaign to diversify the geographic representation of NGOs it associates with the Department of Public Information, the sixty-first Annual DPI/NGO Conference entitled "Reaffirming Human Rights for All: The Universal Declaration at 60" took place for the first time outside New York, at United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Headquarters, in Paris from 5 to 9 September 2008. Over 1,100 participants, representing 65 countries from 461 NGOs affiliated with the Department, the Economic and Social Council, UNESCO and working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, joined in the 2008 Conference to share knowledge and experience on how best to promote and contribute to the advancement of human rights around the world. The website was developed in both English and French and was updated from both Paris and New York during the Conference.

36. Participation was key to the success of the Conference, which offered manifold opportunities for dialogue and exchange (see the figure below on the participants' level of satisfaction with the Conference). This was largely ensured by involving grass-roots organizations during the planning process. Five round tables and accompanying "breakout" sessions allowed for more spirited and less structured conversations and an open sharing of best practices, hopes and opportunities.

Level of satisfaction with the sixty-first DPI/NGO Conference



37. The Secretary-General and the President of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly welcomed more than 700 participants to United Nations Headquarters to discuss the theme "Peace and human rights" on the International Day of Peace 2008. The programme brought together students who gathered at peacekeeping missions in Afghanistan, Liberia and the Sudan (by video link) as well

[1] For the human rights-related activities carried out by the Department's strategic communications services, please see the report of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2009/2).

as 45 schools and organizations at Headquarters, bringing a total of 728 participants. United Nations Messengers of Peace Michael Douglas, Jane Goodall, Midori Goto and Elie Wiesel took part in activities for the International Day of Peace at Headquarters, including the student conference.

38. A new Messenger of Peace, Charlize Theron, was designated in support of the Secretary-General's campaign to end violence against women. The Department organized the Human Rights Day Concert on 15 December 2008, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Spain, and featuring Messenger of Peace Daniel Barenboim with members of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra. Earlier that month, the 2008 United Nations Student Conference on Human Rights connected 350 students from 19 countries and one territory. On the final day of the Conference, 10 schools and organizations assembled at United Nations Headquarters in New York, while a group of students from Latin America gathered for a parallel conference at the United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City. Both sites were electronically linked to schools in Bahrain, India, and South Africa and New Jersey, United States of America, who participated in the conference via videoconference.

39. The Conference was jointly organized with the United Nations International School, New York, and a number of NGO partners. Students worked together to develop a joint Plan of Action that addresses the challenges posed by climate change from a human rights perspective. The Plan of Action was presented to the President of the General Assembly on the last day of the Conference. The entire event was webcast live. Prior to the Conference, participants conducted their own research on climate change and human rights, participated in a live video chat with the Department's focal point for climate change and shared what they had learned through a web-based forum on the United Nations CyberSchoolBus website.

40. The Department has published a special double issue of the *UN Chronicle* (Issue 2/3, 2008) entitled "*Speaking to Our Common Humanity*", in English and French, with in-depth articles on human rights and the recent emergency in food and commodity prices. Contributors to the double issue included the President of Brazil and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Department's Geneva Sales Office, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, published a richly illustrated book for children and adolescents that comprises all 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Early source material related to the drafting of the Declaration are now universally available through a new website which makes available the documents of all the meetings held during this process, as well as biographical information on the members of the Drafting Committee.

41. The activities of the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme have helped to ensure that future generations will learn from the lessons of the Holocaust. The fourth annual observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust was held in January 2009 under the theme "An authentic basis for hope: Holocaust remembrance and education". The solemn ceremony also paid tribute to the veterans of the Second World War who participated in the liberation of the concentration and death camps. In observance of the commemoration, the weekly Department of Public Information/NGO briefing focused on "the Sephardic Jews in Greece: The untold story".

42. The Outreach Programme has forged new partnerships with the Holocaust Education Development Programme of the University of London and the Holocaust Centre in the United Kingdom to make pedagogical tools available to the global network of information centres, in support of their efforts to encourage Holocaust education and remembrance. This initiative of the Department titled the Footprints for Hope Project was designed to bring the field offices and local schools together to involve students aged 13 years and older in the study of the Holocaust and the dangers of hatred and bigotry. To help combat anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, the outreach programme distributed teaching guidelines that were developed by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In addition, the most recent discussion paper in the outreach programme's series outlines the history of the Jews in Europe during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

43. An exhibit entitled "Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race", organized by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, addressed how the Nazi regime perverted medicine and science in its policies of persecution, murder and genocide. Around the world, United Nations information centres organized a number of commemorative activities. The programme continues to work with survivors to ensure that their stories are heard and heeded as a warning of the consequences of discrimination. Two panel discussions were held in the second half of 2008; one highlighted the link between the founding principles of the United Nations and its mandated activities in the areas of Holocaust remembrance and genocide prevention and the other marked the seventieth anniversary of the Kristallnacht pogrom.

44. A variety of Holocaust-related activities were also organized around the world:

- **Africa**: Students in Africa took part in an educational videoconference with United Nations Information Centres in Antananarivo, Brazzaville, Bujumbura, Dakar, Lomé, Yaoundé; UNESCO; le Memorial de la Shoah; the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Kigali; and the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme.

- **Americas**: The United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City, in collaboration with B'nai B'rith and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented an exhibit of drawings and photos of women and children in the Holocaust at the Jewish Cultural Center.

- **Asia and the Pacific**: The United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo profiled *Hana's Suitcase*, the children's book by Karen Levine about Hana Brady, who perished in Auschwitz at age 13.

- **Eastern Europe**: The Department of Public Information component of the United Nations Office in Azerbaijan arranged for the subtitles of the film, "*Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*", to be produced in Azeri for a screening with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

- **Western Europe**: The United Nations Information Service at Geneva mounted two exhibits and held a memorial ceremony in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva, which emphasized Holocaust education and the importance of involving youth in remembrance activities.

45. In 2009, the Department plans to amplify the number and visibility of commemorative activities paying tribute to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. Under the theme "Breaking the silence, beating the drum", the Department will spearhead a series of events around the world, including a concert in the General Assembly Hall and an international student conference/videoconference, in cooperation with UNESCO, to mark the observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on 25 March 2009.

VII. Library services

46. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library provides information services to delegates, the Secretariat and other official groups as well as to the wider public through Internet products, publications and other means of communication. Its activities to preserve and index United Nations documentation ensure that needed information tools are accessible for the current and future work of the United Nations. Research support and training of a mobile Secretariat, and staff of Permanent Missions to the United Nations in the use of new information tools and resources remain a high priority, involving the main library staff and three specialized collections covering the cartographic, legal and economic and social areas.

47. In the last quarter of 2008, a successful programme in General Assembly documentation was attended by over 50 Permanent Mission staff. The overall training programmes were updated in response to client needs and courses have been redesigned to enable attendees to identify, evaluate and make efficient use of the high-quality resources that the Library maintains or to which it subscribes. Additionally, customized programmes and coaching sessions are regularly planned and organized to address the management of the overwhelming amount of information accessible in a rapidly changing, and increasingly electronic, work environment.

Box 1
Comments from training participants

- Comments from Mission staff:

  "Extremely useful session! I would definitely recommend colleagues to take this training."

  "Thank you so much, you made my work so much easier!"

  "Would absolutely suggest this course for the people who just came to the UN."

- Comments from Secretariat staff:

  "Course was useful and relevant to work."

  "Excellent session, full of information and with a very knowledgeable and helpful trainer."

48. The Department of Public Information serves as the secretariat for the United Nations System Electronic Information Acquisition Consortium, which allows individual agencies to select titles from a constantly growing list of suggested electronic resources. The Department, as a coordinator, liaises with the vendors and handles invoices and technical issues on behalf of the agencies. The Consortium has 58 members (in addition to 15 United Nations departments and several peacekeeping operations) in over 45 countries globally, providing services valued at approximately $2.18 million, with the majority being accessible by unlimited users via Internet protocol authentication.

49. Progress in the retrospective digitization of United Nations documents continues. In 2008, some 16,000 documents (98,000 pages) were scanned, put through rigorous quality control and loaded to the Official Document System (ODS). Noteworthy is the completion of the digitization of the main series of Security Council documents from 1946 through 1993 in the English, French and Spanish languages in the first quarter of 2009; the completion of the project for Arabic, Chinese and Russian languages is expected by the end of 2009.

50. For the period from July 2008 to February 2009, approximately 1,400 voting records for resolutions which were adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council during their current sessions and retrospectively during earlier sessions have been recorded in an organized manner in the database for ease of search and reference purposes. The voting records, together with the links to the full text of resolutions, are constantly updated and made available on the United Nations website.

51. During the same period, bibliographic metadata have been created and assigned to more than 20,000 documents and publications of the United Nations and its agencies, and the contents of these documents analysed professionally for ease of search and retrieval. The created metadata and the subject analysis of these documents are the core of the United Nations documents index, ODS and the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet). In addition to creating and assigning bibliographic metadata to current documents and publications, retrospective content analysis and indexing of documents of the earlier sessions of the Security Council and the General Assembly continues. As of 1 January 2009, a total of 813,175 bibliographic metadata are recorded in UNBISnet.

52. A study of the feasibility of using the United Nations Standard Enterprise Content Management system to manage the metadata has demonstrated its benefits to all concerned. A lack of financial resources has, however, precluded a project of migrating bibliographic metadata into the system. However, the Library continues to publish indexes to proceedings for the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council. As the guide to the documentation and proceedings of the three main organs, their commissions, committees and ad hoc committees, the publications include subject indexes to the discussion and action taken on meetings, result of voting, and indexes to speeches made before the forum in question during the particular session. In addition to printed publications, the indexes are made available on the United Nations website.

53. Promotion of operational and fiscal efficiency makes cooperation between the libraries of the United Nations a priority. The United Nations libraries continue to work together on issues such as common indexing policies, digitization operations and United Nations information centres. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library also

cooperates with the libraries of other United Nations System Libraries through the libraries' inter-agency Knowledge Sharing and Information Management Meeting.

54. Developing the thesaurus and authority records in all six official languages remains an important activity in the context of information processing and acquisitions. For the period from July 2008 to February 2009, 2,770 new authority records have been established and 1,769 revised; 30 new thesaurus terms and geographic names have been added to the database and 154 amendments to terms have been made; and more than 10 organizations requested for information on and distribution of electronic and paper version of the thesaurus.

55. Cataloguing of commercial, governmental, intergovernmental publications on subjects of permanent as well as current interest to the Organization, Permanent Missions to the United Nations and the Secretariat, regardless of format, primarily in the six official languages have been made in the bibliographical databases. Some 1,449 monographs and serials were catalogued and 218 website addresses of online version of publications have been added in the databases.

56. The programme of depository libraries coordinates the United Nations relationship with over 400 libraries in Member States. Through regional training, the programme promotes closer cooperation between them and United Nations information centres. In 2008, such programmes were held in Mexico, for libraries in Central America, the Russian Federation, for depository libraries in member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and in India. A training programme for libraries in English-speaking southern Africa is to be held in Pretoria in 2009. In 2009, the Division will work with all depository libraries to ensure their optimal use of technological and electronic resources, conserving time, expenditure and paper, strengthen their capacity and increase partnerships among themselves. Working closely with local United Nations offices, depository libraries will become partners in promoting public awareness of the work of the Organization and focusing attention on issues of importance to the international community.

Box 2

Dual-purpose Library website services

Library website (http://www.un.org/depts/dhl) services continue to be repurposed by others, providing a multiplier effect for the work of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library:

- Up-to-date information on resolutions from the Dag Hammarskjöld Library United Nations Documentation Research Guide are incorporated into the General Assembly web pages, as are pre-set searches on agenda information.
- Pre-set UNBISnet searches are incorporated into the web pages of the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and others to provide ongoing up-to-date information about United Nations documents.

VIII. Multilingualism[2]

57. In response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 61/266, the Secretary-General has appointed the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information as Coordinator for multilingualism. The report of the Secretary-General on multilingualism (A/63/338), presented for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, provides a detailed update on activities undertaken by the Department of Public Information on the issue.

58. The launch of the International Year of Languages in February 2008 presented an additional opportunity for the Department's outreach services to involve several of its core constituencies and to reach out to a broad audience on the subject of multilingualism. In partnership with UNESCO, a global seminar entitled, "Languages matter! Linguistic diversity, globalization and development", was held on 17 and 18 December, for which United Nations Messenger of Peace Paulo Coelho recorded a message.

59. The Department continues to offer a variety of its products and services in a number of languages. Guided tours are a very popular means of introducing the United Nations to the general public. Various duty stations have developed guided tours on their premises. In New York, visitors can at present take tours in Arabic, English, French, German, Hebrew, Korean, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Swedish. Print and electronic editions of *UN Today* and *Sixty Ways the UN Makes a Difference* are also available in several languages, and the number increases as new translations are completed by United Nations information centres and external partners.

IX. Impact of the Capital Master Plan[3]

60. The Department is making provisions to ensure that the level of services that it provides is maintained throughout the period of the Capital Master Plan. While all areas of the Department's outreach services will be impacted to some degree, many are expected to be able to continue to operate without undue disruption. The Capital Master Plan relocation plan calls for the relocation of Department staff in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library building to other locations. This has been particularly challenging for the Library itself, which houses approximately 48,000 linear feet (9 miles) of collections, including the archive collection of United Nations documents since 1946. While some Library staff will remain on site during the first phase of renovations, half of the staff has already moved to space in the Daily News building in late 2008. A small branch will be made operational in the temporary North Lawn Conference Building to provide information services to delegations. These and other services to clients will be disrupted as little as possible thanks to the pre-planning efforts of Library staff.

61. Activities geared to the visiting public will remain based in the General Assembly building through 2011: exhibits in the Visitors' Lobby; guided tours,

[2] For the multilingual activities of the network of United Nations information centres, please see the report of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2009/2).

[3] For information about the impact of the Capital Master Plan on the Department's news services, please see the report of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2009/3).

group briefings in conference rooms in the temporary North Lawn Conference Building; and access to the Public Inquiries counter in the lower concourse of the Visitors' Lobby. There will be some disruption in the operations, however; large groups, for example, will no longer be able to hold their annual United Nations-related outreach programmes at Headquarters and on-site briefings may have to be restructured as videoconference events or outside speaking engagements.

62. Contingent on developments relating to the Capital Master Plan, and the availability of space for tour groups to congregate, it is hoped to resume audio and guided tours as well as briefings in the renovated Conference Building in 2011, with spaces reserved in the temporary North Lawn Conference Building for exhibits, although the Department will increasingly focus on designing travelling exhibits.

63. Virtually all areas of the Department's outreach services will be impacted by the availability of conference rooms. In the case of NGO Relations, the Division is scheduling its annual NGO Conference at various international locations for the duration of the Capital Master Plan. This move, while avoiding possible disruption, also brings the positive benefit of expanding the reach of the Conference to new regions. While efforts are under way to find a venue for the regular NGO briefings, communications workshops and the orientation programme at Headquarters, NGOs will have access to a resource centre throughout the Capital Master Plan period.

64. An important activity for the Department's outreach services is its four annual student conferences which cater to groups of between 170 and 1,000 students, the largest of which, with some 1,000 students, takes place in September on the International Day of Peace. If conference facilities are not available for these events, it will be a challenge to organize them elsewhere as they are heavily dependent on videoconference services and accommodation for hundreds of students on site in New York, for whom coming to United Nations Headquarters is a highlight.

65. The United Nations Bookshop will continue to operate in its current location throughout the initial stages of the Capital Master Plan and at the end of 2011 move to the North Lawn Conference Building. In addition to serving visitors, the shop will look to ways in which it can continue to sell to staff and conference attendees through special sales events, marketing programmes and satellite operations. Potential disruption to the broader publications sales programme will be mitigated by the move of the sales warehouse to an external contractor in the second quarter of 2009.

X. Conclusion

66. **In the words of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, "the foundation of all the UN's work is accountability. We need to change the UN's culture. We must become faster, more flexible, and more effective — more modern." The core of the Department's outreach services is to be an instrument of this accountability to the peoples of the world who have, through their direct participation and questioning, helped define the Organization's aspirations and activities as assuredly as the Member States who ensure their institutional representation and provide legislative direction.**

67. **As the Department plans its programmes and partnerships in the year ahead, conscious of both the limitations and opportunities inherent in the**

process of the Capital Master Plan, four key elements will continue to inform its mission: strategy — to ensure that its activities correspond to the priorities of the Organization; impact — to ensure that each of its activities reaches out to a maximum number of people; creativity — to effectively capture and engage audiences in a competitive environment; and diversity — to enlarge and ensure as broad a participation and globalization of the Department's activities and initiatives.

Annex

"UN Affairs": A progress report

1. In paragraph 30 in the report of the Committee on Information,[a] the Committee discussed the proposal, made by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, "for the *UN Chronicle* to evolve into a journal entitled 'UN Affairs'". Delegations agreed that the Department of Public Information provide them with detailed information on the project, including the concept and a pilot copy of the journal, so as to discuss the possibility of its approval during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, under the item entitled "Questions relating to information".

2. An informal meeting of the Committee on Information was held on 16 September 2008 to consider the pilot copy of "UN Affairs", which was made available to members in response to a request by the Committee for a more detailed accounting of the progress made towards effecting the Department's plans to have the *UN Chronicle* magazine evolve into "UN Affairs".

3. Following the informal meeting, the General Assembly's Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) at its 14th meeting on 22 October 2008, asked the Department to continue with the *UN Chronicle* until a decision is taken on "UN Affairs" (see A/C.4/63/SR.14). Pursuant to that, the Department has published a special double issue of the *UN Chronicle* (Issue 2/3, 2008) entitled, "Speaking to a Common Humanity", in English and French, with two clusters of in-depth articles on human rights and on the ongoing emergency in food and fuel prices. The Department also intends to place online existing translations in Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish of the entire four issues of 2007 and Issue 1 of 2008 of the *UN Chronicle* once the new website is finalized by the Department working in conjunction with the Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Management.

4. At the 14th meeting of its 2008 session, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) also requested the Department, inter alia, to take into account parity of languages, editorial policy, potential qualitative gains and other improvements intended by the change from *UN Chronicle* to "UN Affairs". It urged the Department that, while considering these aspects, emphasis be placed on cost-effective measures and the present budgetary constraints. It also welcomed any other alternative in line with the mandate of the Department for the consideration of Member States (see A/C.4/63/SR.14).

5. The *UN Chronicle* for some years now has not sufficiently reached out to the audience it seeks, especially in enhancing its educational outreach in line with the wishes of the Committee on Information. The total paid distribution of the *UN Chronicle* in English and French has remained just over 3,000 copies per issue. Another six thousand copies are distributed free or at a nominal rate to, inter alia, Member States, libraries, academic and other institutions. The subscription rate has also fallen slightly in line with similar publications.

6. Students and teachers of subjects relevant to the United Nations have often argued with the Department for a different publication that places a greater

[a] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Supplement No. 21* (A/63/21).

emphasis on a comprehensive and more substantive in-depth analysis of a theme and that offered an authoritative voice to scholars, students and practitioners. The need for such a publication is also prompted by the imperative to more closely involve audiences that have a role in shaping news and policy.

7. If the Department is to continue publishing an influential magazine as the flagship publication of the Organization, it needs to adapt it as a new brand that offers a solid opportunity to explore authoritative viewpoints relevant to making informed decisions. It would be the objective of the proposed journal, "UN Affairs", to build upon the core audience of the *UN Chronicle* and involve that readership more closely in the Department's public communications strategies as effective multipliers of the Organization's messages. In this regard, "UN Affairs" would make every effort to reach out to potential authors from around the world, especially from developing countries, in order to ensure an equitable regional and gender balance in the choice of contributors for the journal.

8. The contributors as well as the primary audience of "UN Affairs" are meant to come from those branches of society that shape, assess, evaluate, recommend and implement policy. They are the government leaders, academic experts, civil servants and civil society leaders who have devoted years to a particular issue. In sum, "UN Affairs" would work to promote people's understanding of the work of the Organization and strive to add real input to expert debate on global problems and workable solutions. The aim is also that "UN Affairs" is cited as a source material for assessing, evaluating and framing substantive policies at the United Nations, within Governments, among civil society groups and in institutions of higher learning as well.

9. In respect to reaching out to the maximum number of people around the world through "UN Affairs", the Department is exploring different avenues for achieving language parity. It has been approaching universities, publishers and think tanks, several of which have already expressed their interest, in principle, in publishing the journal in the other official languages of the United Nations. The Department envisages a model arrangement where it would grant an institution the right to translate, publish and distribute the language edition of "UN Affairs" at no expense to the United Nations. The Department is also exploring a separate option of selecting, translating and putting up online 50 per cent of the content of a possible "UN Affairs", within existing resources.

10. The Department affirms that a change from *UN Chronicle* to "UN Affairs" would be in line with the commitment made at the above-mentioned meeting of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, who stated that in light of the current budgetary situation, it was his intention not to ask for additional resources.